

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

The Benefits of International Volunteering in Educational Institutions in Cape Town

Susanne Steckel
STCSUS003

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the
degree of Master of Social Science

Faculty of the Humanities
University of Cape Town
2008

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: S. Steckel Date: 23.01.2008

Abstract

International volunteerism or volunteer tourism is a growing phenomenon and more and more individuals are enthused to take part in volunteer programmes abroad. At the same time, volunteering is widely promoted as an urgent intervention to combat social problems in the receiving countries, problems such as poverty, inequality, hunger and diseases.

Based on the widespread assumption that there is a growing need for volunteers as well as increased interest in volunteering abroad, the present study discusses international volunteering in educational service institutions in Cape Town. The study examines two volunteer programmes in Cape Town offered to international volunteers, presents the positive and negative outcomes of these programmes and analyses their value for all parties concerned.

On the basis of the data gathered during eight weeks of fieldwork, I argue that these programmes are of value to both the volunteers and to the recipients of their services, albeit in different ways. The positive responses from both sides were significant indicators of the success of the programmes and of the various benefits for all parties. Open-mindedness, enthusiasm and a positive attitude on the part of the volunteers were key characteristics that had a considerable and positive effect on both their and the recipients' experiences. Being aware of carrying out a serving role and willingness to learn were deciding factors for the volunteers to gain value.

However, existing power relations between so-called First and Third World countries are often reproduced in volunteer programmes abroad since such programmes are predominantly offered in "Third World/developing" countries and restricted to a particular clientele. Even though such power relations may be reproduced through international volunteer programmes the present study highlights the benefits of international volunteering in educational institutions in Cape Town. The present study further illustrates such power relations and whether they have an impact on the benefits of international volunteering in educational institutions in Cape Town.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the realisation of this study. I would like to thank my invaluable supervisor, Sally Frankental from the Department of Social Anthropology, who has provided me with endless support, guidance and constructive critique. Her valuable knowledge and assistance through the process of preparing and conducting my fieldwork and finally writing my thesis were most encouraging. Without her constant support through difficult periods and motivating me I would not have been able to achieve.

I would also like to thank both volunteer organisations who allowed me to conduct this study. Their very helpful assistance and provision of material added important inputs to my study. I am very grateful to the volunteers from both organisations for their participation and for always making me feel welcome. Without their cooperation the fieldwork would not have been possible.

The staff of the different educational institutions agreed to help during my fieldwork and I am very pleased for their participation and assistance. Their open-mindedness for my research was very supportive in the course of my work.

Many thanks to Emma for her help with English style and grammar, correcting both and offering suggestions for improvement. Special thanks to Mario for his moral support and understanding. My friends' understanding, patience and support also played a big part throughout the entire process.

Lastly, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my family for encouraging me and making my studies possible.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgments.....	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Tables	v
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Context of the Study.....	1
1.2 Motivation for the Study.....	4
1.3 Aims and Objectives.....	4
1.4 Volunteer Organisations and Programmes.....	5
1.5 Literature Review	8
1.6 Chapter Outline	10
Chapter 2: Methodology.....	11
2.1 Sample.....	12
2.2 Methods	14
2.2.1 Participant Observation.....	14
2.2.2 Interviews.....	15
2.3 Methods used in Analysis of Data	16
2.4. Ethical Considerations.....	17
Chapter 3: Understanding the Gap Between Expectation and Experience: Motivations Behind Volunteering and How They Affect Volunteer Success.....	18
3.1 Categories of Motivation.....	18
3.2 Expectations vs. Experiences.....	30
3.3 Crime: A Disturbing Factor	37
3.4 Conclusion	38
Chapter 4: Perceptions Surrounding the Benefits of International Volunteer Workers in Cape Town	39
4.1 Students' Responses and Responsiveness towards Volunteers.....	40
4.2 Parents' Responses	44
4.3 Teachers', Principals' and Caregivers' Perspectives	46
4.4 Volunteers' as Victims of Crime.....	51
4.5 Conclusion	52

Chapter 5: Why Work with International Volunteers?	53
5.1 Volunteerism in South Africa	53
5.2 International Volunteers as Role Models?	56
5.3 International Volunteering and Global Power Relations of Inequality	57
5.4 Conclusion	59
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations	61
References	63
Appendix 1	69
Appendix 2	70

University of Cape Town

List of Tables

Table 1: Volunteer Distribution by Nationality and Programmes.....12

Table 2: Educational Background of the Volunteers13

University of Cape Town

Chapter 1: Introduction

“Volunteering brings benefits to both society at large and the individual volunteer. It makes important contributions, economically as well as socially. It contributes to a more cohesive society by building trust and reciprocity among citizens” (United Nations Volunteers).

1.1 Context of the Study

Volunteering is generally promoted as an activity carried out in order to benefit others and thus make important contributions to the “common good” of society, as illustrated in the above statement of the UN Volunteers (UNV). Volunteering can be defined as an activity through which individuals offer their services and time in order to benefit other people, communities or institutions, without receiving payment (Brudney 1993; Clary & Snyder 1999; Wilson & Musick 1997; Wilson 2000). Various authors indicate that, while offering their time and free service, volunteers also benefit from their voluntary activities (Clary & Snyder 1991; Ellis 2007; Gann 1996; Lauffer & Gorodezky 1977; Wearing 2001; Wilson 2000).

International volunteerism or volunteer tourism is a growing phenomenon and more and more individuals are – for various reasons – enthused to take part in volunteer programmes abroad. The promotion of volunteering, and its role in improving public services, is continuously increasing. This increase is reflected in the steadily growing number of organisations that offer such programmes which can be seen in the following online research results on the topic: The search engine *Google* had 21,100,000 search results for volunteering opportunities in May 2007 and 23,200,000 in September 2007. The ‘top ranking’ sites on Google refer to volunteer programmes and promotion for volunteers. The results range from volunteer opportunities and programmes, nationwide or international, to volunteer vacations. Common conceptions about development interventions are also manifest in that these programmes are predominantly offered in so-called developing countries. Unevenly conceived power relations between countries commonly referred to as First and Third World countries¹ are reproduced as a result of this link (Callanan & Thomas 2005: 193) as will be shown in chapter four and five. At the

¹ The categories ‘First World’ and ‘Third World’ relate to perceptions of degrees of a country’s ‘development’. The ‘First World’ refers to technologically advanced and democratic countries with a high standard of living which is often presented as the North. In contrast to the ‘First World’ exists the ‘Third World’ which is also known as the South, developing or less developed countries (Cole 1987: 4-5).

same time, volunteering is widely promoted as an urgent intervention to combat social problems such as poverty, inequality, hunger and diseases.

In 1997, the United Nations General Assembly declared the year 2001 the International Year of Volunteers (IYV) in order to promote volunteering and increase its recognition, facilitation and networking. The argument underlying IYV 2001 was based on the idea that “voluntary service is needed more than ever to tackle problems in areas of social, economic, cultural, humanitarian and peace-building, and that more people are needed to offer their services as volunteers” (World Volunteers Web 2006)². UN Volunteers and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) highlighted the relation between volunteerism and development. In their view, volunteering serves as “a key to achieving the Millennium Development Goals³” (UNDP 2003: 1). According to the UNDP Report, in 2003 millions of ordinary people offered their services for free, illustrating their initiative and desire to contribute to the “greater good” of the world, and their belief that they have something to offer. The latest UN Volunteers Report records that in 2006, 7,623 UN Volunteers⁴ representing 163 nationalities offered their service in 144 countries. These volunteers supported governmental activities, the UN organised initiatives, NGOs and other civil service organisations in initiatives that attempted to reduce and combat widespread contemporary problems such as poverty, hunger, inequality and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In addition to the highlighted social benefits, volunteerism can also have an economic impact (UNDP 2003; Wilson & Musick 1997). In offering their time and energy without pay, volunteers’ contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is – in a broad diversity of countries – estimated between 8% and 14% (UNDP 2003: 1). In cooperation with the UNDP, the Johns Hopkins Centre for Civil Society Studies (2007) reported that the contribution made to the GDP by the civil society sector is as much as that made by the construction and finance industries, and twice as much as by the utilities industry. According to these calculations the civil society and volunteering sectors carry an enormous yield and are thus important contributors to a country’s growth and wealth.

Due to the growing interest in and promotion of volunteers a new market has been established. An expanding group of tourism companies, often in partnership with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or non-profit organisations (NPOs), have responded to the call for volunteers on the one hand and the increasing critique of mass tourism on

² The World Volunteer Web is an initiative by the United Nations Volunteer UNV programme in partnership with other organisations, including the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), Millennium Campaign, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The website deals with matters surrounding volunteerism and offers informative support to the voluntary sector (<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/>).

³ Set for 2015, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aim to reduce poverty, to support education, maternal health, gender equality, and to promote ways to combat child mortality, AIDS and other diseases.

⁴ UN Volunteers offers volunteer opportunities only to women and men who have a minimum of three to five years of professional experience.

the other. The concept of volunteering abroad emerged in the 1970s in the United States and Europe (Callanan & Thomas 2005: 185). Promoting “sustainability”, volunteering abroad or volunteer tourism has involved recruiting volunteers for development projects and offering alternative vacations at the same time. The new forms of tourism are labelled “ecotourism”, “community-based tourism”, “moral tourism”, “cultural tourism”, or simply “alternative tourism” (Butcher 2003; Callanan & Thomas 2005; Stronza 2001). Eadington & Smith (1992: 3) argue that alternative tourism includes “forms of tourism that are consistent with natural, social, and community values, and which allow both hosts and guests to enjoy positive and worthwhile interaction and shared experiences”. While alternative forms of tourism were first believed to benefit local people, the environment and provide positive interaction between hosts and guests, more and more criticism has emerged as to whether or not these alternative forms do in fact benefit the people concerned, or whether they are as exploitative as more “traditional” forms of tourism (Johnston 2006: 3).

In the South African context, where tourism has been growing steadily since the ending of Apartheid and the first democratic elections in 1994, alternative forms of tourism have grown and developed. Generally, South Africa, well-known for its diversity of people is represented by the UN and World Bank documents as a middle-income country and as Africa’s most industrialised economy. Even though South Africa has a relatively strong economy and modern infrastructure, however, the major inequalities resulting from the racial segregation of its Apartheid past has left South African society deeply divided. This, amongst other things, is reflected in the country’s large income inequality. While the white minority is still in possession of most of the country’s economic power and wealth, the black majority remains poor (Frankental & Sichone 2005: XVII).

The South African government promotes tourism – which is recognised as the country’s fastest growing industry – and recognises its potential to bring money into the economy and to create much-needed jobs (Frankental & Sichone 2005: 254). With this in mind (and according to Shackleton et al. 2007), it is often believed that alternative forms of tourism present an opportunity to ensure that the people living in the areas being visited are also benefiting from the economic growth. In the case of international volunteer programmes, the benefits are assumed to be the volunteers’ direct engagement and the services they offer rather than the economic benefits. The reality of this notion will be discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

1.2 Motivation for the Study

My motivation to research the topic of volunteerism is multidimensional. My interest in the development industry and development conceptions combined with own experiences as a volunteer in Cape Town were central in my exploration of the matters surrounding volunteerism. Various university-based courses dealing with conceptions, practices and outcomes of development interventions in so-called underprivileged countries, and critiques of those, caught my attention. The severe criticism of development interventions by some theorists provoked me to examine the subject more closely. On the one hand I aimed to re-evaluate my own motivations and experiences as a volunteer working with HIV/Aids orphans and on the other hand to examine the widely believed importance of development interventions (and thus volunteers) and gain insight into their outcomes.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

Based on the widespread assumption that there is a growing need for volunteers and the growth of the volunteer tourism sector, this thesis explores international volunteering in two educational service institutions in the greater Cape Town area.

The current study is an investigation of the motivations, expectations and actual experiences of the international volunteers in particular, but also includes consideration of the needs and aims of the social institutions with which they were involved. The study aims to examine why young individuals decide to volunteer in the first place, and why they choose to do so in South Africa. It further aims to explore the institutions' and recipients' attitudes towards, and the value they give to, the volunteers. The study critically analyses the positions of both sides of volunteering, and the expectations and experienced reality of volunteering and focuses on the positive and negative factors around international volunteers.

Since development interventions in "underprivileged" or "developing" countries have become a critical issue, volunteer tourism as an alternative form of "doing good" and being involved in development projects in these countries emerges as a field of exploration in social sciences. Anthropologists who have investigated tourism have focused mainly on either the origin of tourism or on the impact that tourism has on local communities (MacCannell 1976; Machlis & Burch 1983; Nash 1996). In order to find out what can create social, economic and environmental benefits for local communities but can also create truly beneficial experiences for tourists, a more holistic perspective and investigation of both the tourists' and locals' sides is needed (Stronza 2001: 261). This is what I aim to provide with regard to international volunteers.

1.4 Volunteer Organisations and Programmes

Fieldwork research for this thesis focused on two volunteer organisations that offered short-term (5 to 8 weeks) educational volunteer programmes in Cape Town and the surrounding areas. One is a South African organisation based in Cape Town, and the other an American organisation with a programme manager in Cape Town. To simplify matters, the Cape Town-based organisation will be named eKhaya and the American-based organisation Outreach⁵. Both volunteer organisations are described and registered as non-profit organisations. They combine volunteering with development projects, and charge the volunteers a fee for their participation in their projects. The programme fees cover the main costs (e.g. administration costs, placements and accommodation). The volunteers participating in the Outreach programme pay higher fees, which include their travel expenses (e.g. flight and airport shuttle) and pay extra for sightseeing activities. EKhaya gives each volunteer R200 on arrival to buy materials for their particular project and some tourist activities are included in their programme fees. The institutions where the volunteers are placed do not receive any money from the programme fees; their benefit comes solely from the volunteers' work.

Outreach offers programmes all over the world to undergraduates and graduates from well-known universities in the United States. The organisation promotes its teaching programme on its website as an "opportunity for young people to make a meaningful contribution to international education by living and working as volunteer teachers in developing countries". The organisation was established in the 1980s to give educational support to developing countries. According to their programme outline, the volunteer programmes they offer provide individuals with the opportunity to gain experiences in a cultural environment different from their own, to find out about the local culture and contribute to community development, and to develop skills such as teaching, "cross-cultural communication" and leadership. These catch-phrases reflect common persuasive advertising strategies that are frequently used to "sell" other, more traditional kinds of tourism. The Outreach programmes are promoted as going beyond a simple package holiday.

Outreach's two-month South African programme takes place once a year – during the American summer vacation – in the Cape Peninsula area where volunteers work mainly as teaching assistants in underprivileged schools as well as in additional tutoring programmes for disadvantaged school students. In the South African context "underprivileged" and "disadvantaged" correlates highly with apartheid-era racial classification, so that both the children and the geographic areas of their schools will have

⁵ Since I gave written assurance that I would not disclose identities, pseudonyms are used for the names of both organisations. As a result, I also cannot reference their websites.

been classified 'coloured' or 'black/African' under apartheid. The volunteers are accommodated with white middle class host families in areas surrounding those where they work. The programme is clearly outlined as one that involves strong teamwork and flexibility, and volunteers who participate are required to work together on the different projects (see below). Only 19 out of approximately 100 applicants could participate in the 2007 summer programme because of the limited number of suitable host families, in the required vicinity, who were willing to accommodate volunteers.

The programme was organised as follows:

- *The orientation week* took place in the first week. The volunteers stayed at a camp, where they got to know each other and were introduced to the programme and the principals of the six schools where they were placed. It was an intense week of information transfer where the volunteers were also given a brief introduction to South African history, as well as information on host families, safety, transport, health, local "culture", culture shock-symptoms and coping strategies, race, gender and nationality.
- *Phase 1* of actual work took place in the library in one of the black townships surrounding Cape Town⁶, directly after the orientation week. In this two-week programme, the volunteers offered math, English and computer classes to disadvantaged students, predominantly school children, in the township. One group of volunteers created 'Hero Books'⁷ with some of the children from the township, and another developed a directory⁸ resource for the youth of the township. Phase 1 was organised to take place during the school holidays. The programme was advertised to local students in advance by the programme manager and staff of the library.
- *Phase 2* started in the third week and was scheduled for five weeks. During this period the volunteers worked in different schools. Between two and five volunteers were placed in each school. Besides two high schools (one combined with a primary school), all the schools were primary schools in the Cape Peninsula area.

EKhaya organises exchange programmes worldwide and administers two in-country programmes that provide opportunities for foreigners to work and volunteer in

⁶ South African 'townships' were created during Apartheid during the 1950s and 1960s to house the non-white workforce of the Apartheid regime. Townships were usually located on the peripheries of South African cities for the working non-white population to service white interests (Godehart 2006). Today, South African townships remain as the result of the past racial classifications and enforced segregation and they lack infrastructure, services and adequate housing due to the minimal state investments during the Apartheid era.

⁷ A Hero Book is a document in which the child is the author of a book in which he/she is the main character. The children draw pictures about a specific topic in their life. It is an exercise through which a group of children execute a series of drawing exercises and autobiographical story-telling that focuses on challenges and problems experienced by the children. The aim of the exercise is to help children come to term with the past and deal with difficulties in the present.

⁸ The main idea of this directory is to provide information about educational, employment and community activities to people in need of these services.

South Africa. In the case of the volunteer programme, the organisation “acts as the receiving agent for the volunteers”⁹ and is in charge of organising accommodation, airport transfers, project placements and on-the-spot support (Irvin 2006: 25). The organisation receives between 10-20 volunteers from affiliated organisations weekly, throughout the year. According to the manager of eKhaya, the number of volunteers has increased steadily year by year. Individuals can choose between a variety of programme options in areas such as health and community, education, tourism and environment. Programmes vary in duration – 5-weeks, 9-weeks or 3-months – and always include a week of orientation (Irvin 2006: 25). While Outreach sets high value on teamwork, eKhaya offers individual placements. These volunteers are placed with coloured and black middle class host families who live in black African or coloured townships on the Cape Flats. Their programmes are organised as follows:

- The *orientation week* takes place in the city centre of Cape Town, where the volunteers are accommodated in the organisation’s own hostel. The week serves to give the volunteers “an understanding of the people, culture, languages and political climate of South Africa”. The volunteers are also provided with information about travel and safety, medical advice and how to prepare for the upcoming project. Different sightseeing tours are offered during this week. In contrast to the orientation week of the other group, which was based on an intense introduction of the programme and information about South Africa, the orientation week for this group is mainly based on sightseeing tours and includes a brief introduction to South Africa
- The volunteers start their projects immediately after the orientation week, and move to their host families in the townships. The volunteers participating in this study were placed in primary schools, pre-schools or crèches. Their daily activities varied – from assisting teachers in their classes, and playing with and feeding children, to changing nappies. While some participated in a four-week programme, most of the volunteers stayed for eight weeks. They were encouraged to spend weekends in the City Bowl, so that they could experience Cape Town’s city life, and also relax and recover from their work, or travel around.

The organisations and institutions where the volunteers were placed for work mainly presented themselves as places where help is desperately needed. These institutions often have to deal with a lack of staff, equipment, or funds and clearly expressed their need for assistance.

⁹ The organisation works with approximately 35 organisations worldwide that recruit volunteers and administer the application process.

1.5 Literature Review

In the existing literature about volunteerism there is a tendency to promote volunteerism and the voluntary sector on the assumption that volunteers are needed to improve social services. Most of this literature deals with the involvement, roles and tasks of volunteers working in social care. A number of works aim to promote voluntary work and give recommendations of how to manage volunteers effectively (e.g. Gann 1996; Handy 1988; Lauffer & Gorodezky 1977; McSweeney & Alexander 1996). These authors tend to see voluntary work as an important contribution to improving the quality of life of individuals and communities in developing countries.

Other authors discuss the positive and negative aspects of working with volunteers more critically (e.g. Brudney 1993; Ellis 2007; Manser & Cass 1976; Lauffer & Gorodezky 1977; Merrill 2005). Lauffer & Gorodezky (1977) and Merrill (2005) stress that volunteers can extend the services provided by an agency and enable paid staff to concentrate in-depth on their expertise, projects or clients. Volunteers are usually enthusiastic and personally committed, which is assumed to have a positive effect on their work, clients, and staff, as well as for the agency.

In some instances, however, the negative aspects of volunteerism outweigh the benefits, at least in part, because of the different levels of competence amongst volunteers. Some volunteers may be highly skilled or learn quickly while others might not meet the demands of the agency but are still accepted (Lauffer & Gorodezky 1977: 9-11; Merrill 2005). In an article about 'Voluntourism', Ellis (2007) discusses the pros and cons of working with volunteers. She argues that the way in which volunteering opportunities are chosen, whether these reflect real needs of societies in which they are present, and whether volunteers can in fact do something useful in such short periods, are all matters that need to be taken into account for a full understanding of the phenomenon.

While the investigation of volunteerism has predominantly focused on promoting and managing volunteers, there has been little enquiry into the experiences of volunteers themselves concerning their voluntary work. In this study I highlight the volunteers' experiences of their volunteer work and the value they attribute to it. In their last chapter, Darvill & Munday (1984) present a postscript of volunteers' viewpoints. In one of the postscripts a volunteer explains in detail how their prior expectations differed from their actual experiences. Similar results are presented by Wearing (2001) in his study on volunteer tourism. He demonstrates, using examples from volunteers, that there are many motivations for volunteering, and that expectations and actual experience often differ. Other authors mention the reasons that inspire individuals to participate in community services, but do not pay any further attention to the motives and motivations of volunteers (Williams 2001; Coles 1993; Foster & Naidoo 2001).

There are also several investigations from a psychological perspective into the motivations behind and reasons why people decide to volunteer (Clary & Snyder 1991; Grusec 1991; Krebs & van Hesteren 1992; Unger 1991). In the 1990s Clary & Snyder made various contributions to the understanding of what motivates volunteers. In their investigations of volunteerism, they noted six motivational functions served by volunteerism: value (related to altruism), understanding (gaining new knowledge and experience), social (networks with others), career (learning new career-relevant skills), protective (to escape from one's own negative feelings) and enhancement (personal development). According to Clary & Snyder (1999) individuals' motivations for carrying out volunteer activities are complex and cannot be attributed to one particular motive. Their analysis regarding the motives and motivations of volunteers is useful for a more psychological understanding of volunteerism.

There have also been various studies about alternative forms of tourism that are combined with forms of volunteerism, termed 'voluntourism' (Callanan & Thomas 2005; Lea 1993; Rovinski 1991; Wearing 2001). Ecotourism, for example, has become a very popular type of travel, where tourists can contribute to environmental work whilst travelling (Callanan & Thomas 2005; Johnston 2006; Wearing 2001). The literature about volunteer tourism focuses primarily on volunteering as a special form of tourism. Voluntourism has further become a niche market in tourism. In the last 30 years, the combination of volunteering and travelling has increased progressively. According to Callanan & Thomas (2005), the growth in the 'voluntourism' sector can be attributed to the increasing number of volunteer projects, the variety and number of destinations available, and an increasing number of people volunteering. They further argue that volunteer tourism has become more and more popular because of an "increasingly 'guilt-conscious' society" (Callanan & Thomas 2005: 183), and is born of a 'restless society' that seeks to experience an alternative form of tourism.

The main studies that deal with matters concerning volunteerism promote and interpret volunteering in a dualistic way. On the one hand, volunteering is seen as an activity where individuals volunteer their free time to enhance or contribute to an environment or a local community. On the other, it is defined as an activity that aims to benefit the actor, carried out for self-development reasons. In the literature there is an ongoing debate as to whether altruistic or self-interested motives are more strongly represented. While earlier studies focused on altruistic motives, more recent studies come to the conclusion that, as Clary & Snyder argue, "people's motivations for performing actions as diverse, complex, and sustained as volunteerism are very likely to be multifaceted" (Clary & Snyder 1999: 157). The present study indeed shows that the motivations of volunteers are complex and multidimensional (see chapter three).

1.6 Chapter Outline

Chapter two presents the methods employed in this study. The chapter demonstrates the process of conducting the research over a period of eight weeks. I discuss the choice of the different methods used and the selection of the participants, and highlight the ethical issues considered in the course of fieldwork and writing.

Chapter three addresses the individual motivations for, and expectations about, offering their service in South Africa, as stated by the volunteer participants in informal conversations and interviews. I illustrate the volunteers' initial perceptions of their roles as volunteers and compare these to their experiences gained in the field. I argue that irrespective of whether their motivations and initial expectations concur with their actual experiences, they always benefit from the volunteer experience in some way.

In chapter four I demonstrate how the international volunteers were perceived by the local population and institutions. The chapter gives insight into the way that recipients value the presence and work of the volunteers. The feedback of some students, parents, principles and caregivers are presented. I demonstrate that the recipients also gained from the volunteer programmes and that a reciprocal exchange, although not necessarily equal, took place. The positive responses from both sides were significant indicators of the success of the programmes and of the benefits for all parties.

A further discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of international volunteers is the subject of chapter five. The role of the international volunteers presented in this study in disadvantaged institutions will be analysed and existing power relations between the so-called First and Third World countries will be considered. The fact that the volunteers studied for the purposes of this thesis were placed in disadvantaged institutions only reflects and thus reproduces such power relations and will be interrogated. With these factors in mind, however, I nevertheless conclude that the work of international volunteers can be beneficial for all parties, depending of course on the individual and collective motivations, expectations and experiences involved.

The final chapter concludes and provides recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2: Methodology

In order to gain maximum insight into international volunteering, and to gather as much information as possible about the volunteers, the organisations responsible for their presence in South Africa, and the institutions in which they worked, a variety of research methods were used. This chapter presents the different methods, the process of research over a period of eight weeks, and the process by which the participants were selected. Research included intensive participant observation and informal conversations at the volunteers' work sites and on social occasions beyond work hours and more formal interviews with a selection of participants. In addition, written material was provided by the managers of the volunteer organisations, by the volunteers themselves and by the institutions in which they worked. It consisted of evaluation forms completed by volunteers for their programmes, commentary from local parents regarding the volunteers' work, letters from students to the volunteers or the organisations, and some statements by teachers who worked with the volunteers. Information available on the organisations' websites and from a 2006 Masters thesis that examines one of the volunteer programmes that I present here, served as additional data sources. The good fortune of having access to written evaluations conducted by the organisations, also added valuable insight.

Prior to conducting fieldwork I had identified a number of organisations and recruitment agencies through an intensive search on the World Wide Web. I sent out emails and made phone calls to establish contact, but finding participants for my research turned out to be more difficult than expected. It was during this preparatory stage that I located the American organisation that offers educational programmes for American college students to volunteer abroad, dubbed 'Outreach' in this thesis. Upon agreement with the head of the organisation, the manager¹⁰ of their programme in South African welcomed my research and, in particular, my participation in the orientation week. Once the volunteers arrived, I had to gain their permission as well.

I had also contacted a range of other recruitment agencies in order to get broader insight into such programmes and from other volunteers. During this phase of research contact was made with eKhaya, the organisation based in Cape Town that is part of a global network of volunteer tourist and student travel organisations. The organisation

¹⁰ The manager has been in this position for the last 3 years (since the inception of the programme). Originally from the UK, he is a graduate of anthropology and did research about the NGO sector in Cape Town from 1990 to 1994. He also received a Masters degree in social anthropology from the University of Cape Town. In 1998, he qualified as a tour guide and established his own tour company. Through his academic research and interest in crossing racial barriers, he established links with projects in South African townships and is particularly interested in dynamic changes in South Africa.

approved my research in principle, conditional upon the individual consent of each volunteer.

Once I had the consent of the organisations and the volunteers involved, gaining access to the staff and students of the institutions where the volunteers worked was relatively uncomplicated. The institutions where the volunteers were placed were open to the research and gave permission to observe the volunteers at work. Additional data from parents, students and teachers was also useful in gaining a more holistic understanding of the impact of volunteerism in these Cape Town organisations.

2.1 Sample

The focus of the research was mainly on international volunteers from two different organisations, and partly on the managers and staff of these organisations, staff of the educational institutions, and input from parents and students.

The main participants in this research were the 24 volunteers – 19 women and 5 men – that were primarily from the United States and participating in the Outreach programme. One female volunteer was from Canada and another was from China. Other volunteers who participated in the study were from Europe and joined the South African-based organisation eKhaya. Table 1 illustrates in which programmes the volunteers from different countries participated in:

Table 1: Volunteer Distribution by Nationality and Programmes

<i>Nationality</i> <i>Programme</i>	<i>American</i>	<i>Canadian</i>	<i>Chinese</i>	<i>British</i>	<i>German</i>	Σ
<i>Outreach</i>	17	1	1	-	-	19
<i>EKhaya</i>	-	-	-	2	3	5
Σ	17	1	1	2	3	24

Both volunteer programmes had volunteers with different levels of qualification. Table 2 demonstrates their educational backgrounds:

Table 2: Educational Background of the Volunteers

Category Country (b)	Student (a)			Graduate from University			Qualified Teacher/Caregiver			Total Participants
	m	f	Σ	m	f	Σ	m	f	Σ	Σ
USA	3	9	12	1	2	3	-	4	4	19
UK	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Germany	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	3
Σ	3	12	15	2	2	4	-	5	5	24

Notes:

- (a) All student¹¹ volunteers from the United States and the UK were enrolled at university. Only the German volunteer had just graduated from school and has applied to university.
- (b) The 'Country' column on the table refers to the sending country and is not the nationality of the volunteers.

As illustrated in Table 1, the majority of the volunteers who contributed to the research were from the United States. They came to South Africa as a group and participated in the South African-run summer teaching programme. Most of them were still university students. A few had just graduated from university, and five were qualified teachers. The participants from the UK were both female students. German participants included one male university graduate, one female school graduate and one female qualified caregiver.

The international volunteers participating in the South African-run programme eKhaya were exclusively European, and came mainly from the UK and Germany. In the course of eKhaya's orientation week I made contact with five volunteers, three from Germany and two from the UK. Due to time constraints, the scope of my research with this group was limited to these five participants. During a library search I discovered that eKhaya had been studied for a Masters thesis in 2006 and that thesis provided further material and information with regard to this particular organisation.

¹¹ When using the term 'students' in the chapters to follow, I refer solely to the local students on the receiving end of the volunteer programmes.

During the orientation week I stayed with the Outreach group in a camp in the Peninsula area, where we were introduced to each other and got better acquainted. This week provided an excellent opportunity for participant observation and in addition to establishing rapport, I was able to gather my first insights into the motivations and expectations of the overseas volunteers.

2.2 Methods

To explore the motives, expectations and experiences of these foreign volunteers I carried out intensive participant observation as well as semi-structured interviews. Due to the small number of participants, this study cannot aim to be representative of either volunteers or volunteer organisations in general but rather seeks to explore, ethnographically, the actual experiences and relationships of volunteers and the recipients of their services, beyond the rhetoric of those who promote 'international volunteering'.

2.2.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation was one of the main methods used during this research as it is a useful method by which to gain in-depth insight into the field of study, and one that is certainly central to an anthropological approach. Using this method the researcher is able to gather information on their field of study through direct contact with the focus of their observation i.e. through participation. According to Adler & Adler (1998: 80), the key concept of participant observation lies in the researcher's active attendance and readiness to "witness the phenomena they are studying in action". This method requires that the researcher does not intervene in the situations they observe, and attempts to neither influence nor direct the subject of their observation, and thus gain insight into the everyday life of their informants. Dewalt et al (1998: 260) describe participant observation as "a way to collect data in a relatively unstructured manner in naturalistic settings by ethnographers who observe and/or take part in the common and uncommon activities of the people being studied". Based on these characteristics, participant observation allows researchers to collect their data relatively freely, and according to what seems to be important to their subjects. The emphasis of their research, therefore, is on the subject (Adler & Adler 1998: 81).

I participated fully during the orientation weeks of both organisations¹² and throughout the fieldwork period I participated in the volunteers' activities, following them as closely as possible. Being able to participate in the daily activities of the volunteers

¹² I was given permission to stay with the Outreach group during orientation.

enabled me, as a researcher, to gather observational data that was not only valuable in and of itself, but which also enabled me to compare my observations with the volunteers' reports and stories. Furthermore, I was able to observe the volunteers at work and able to participate to a considerable degree in most of their activities, both during and outside of their work hours. The periods of participant observation also helped me appear to my informants as a 'like-minded person' and not just a researcher and outsider.

I experienced some difficulties during fieldwork. To maximise contact with the volunteers, I had hoped to be able to participate in most of their social events and join them for drinks, meals, adventure tours, etc. Due to my financial constraints and the distance from central Cape Town where I lived to the area where they worked and were accommodated, this aspect of my research was limited. As with many aspects of life in South Africa in 2007, safety issues also affected my ability to participate in all the volunteers' after-hour activities, such as going to pubs or to their host family homes, as I did not feel safe driving home alone at night.

2.2.2 Interviews

My ethnographic data was significantly enriched by the agreement of all parties concerned to participate in my research through other means as well. In addition to participant observation, I conducted research in the form of informal conversations and semi-structured interviews with the volunteers, programme manager and school principals. While participant observation served the purpose of finding out what people actually do, conversations and interviews provided me with information regarding what they think they do and what they value (Bernard 1995: 310). This was important in critically examining any incongruencies between the symbolic and idealised constructions made by my informants regarding their volunteer work, and its actual implications. The interview method provided my informants with the opportunity to speak directly, in their own terms. According to Scheurich (1997), interviewing consists of two parts: doing the interview and analysing the interview. In one-on-one interviews the interviewer asks the interviewee questions (predetermined or developed within the process of the interview), records the responses on a tape, transcribes the interview, and then codes and analysis the interview (Scheurich 1997: 61). This is often used to give voice to informants and uncover questions that haven't arisen during observation, as well as to compare the researcher's observed experiences with the statements regarding, and experiences of, the participants, as explained above.

While informal conversations took place spontaneously and in all places, semi-structured interviews were arranged in advance and took place in different places and at different times, e.g., during the week of orientation, during the course the programme and

at the end of the programme. The questions were mainly open-ended with a few closed questions to clarify details or general information. The open-ended questions prompted interviewees to expand upon their own answers and to interpret their experiences in their own terms.

Semi-structured interviews were also helpful in obtaining answers to specific questions, such as those regarding motivation, initial expectations of the volunteers and those on the receiving end of their work. They also enabled me to clarify questions that had arisen in the course of other informal interactions. All interviews were recorded and transcribed (for a list of questions asked see Appendix 1).

The semi-structured interviews further allowed me to assess the satisfactions and/or disappointments experienced by the volunteers in relation to their original expectations regarding their volunteer work. The interviews, all between about 30-50 minutes' duration, also allowed both the interviewer and the interviewee flexibility to explore details and discuss issues.

2.3 Methods used in Analysis of Data

I have used different techniques of analysis for each of the different research methods used, with the aim of generating accurate descriptions and interpretations. Due to the different methods used in the course of my research, a considerable volume of data was collected.

In order to arrange and analyse the data, the interviews were transcribed and the themes then identified. The transcriptions were double-checked with the audio recordings and then read several times in order to become familiar with the statements given by the participants (De Wet & Erasmus 2005: 30-31). I then coded the field note data and the interview transcriptions and arranged them into the different themes and analysed the connections between them, which allowed for further conclusions to be drawn. Using different research methods enabled me to compare my own experiences and observations with those of the participants as described in the interviews and on the evaluation forms.

I had recorded my experiences during participant observation in a fieldwork diary. Some of the field notes were organised into field reports, which received feedback from my supervisor. The feedback of my supervisor further encouraged and inspired the process of my analysis. My field notes also included reflections and interpretations that I had made in situ and these further shaped my analysis.

2.4. Ethical Considerations

In view of the fact that the research project was based on the investigation of expectations, experiences and actual behaviour on the part of the participants, several ethical aspects had to be considered before and during the course of the project. I aimed to ensure that every individual who participated in the research project was treated with “respect and dignity” (Ethical Guidelines ASA 2004: 1).

In accordance with the wishes of the participants, I have disguised their identities and avoided using any information with identifying characteristics.

Another ethical consideration relates to my relationships with the participants as a researcher. A relatively high degree of sensitivity was required. Some participants, even though they agreed to participate in my research, sometimes gave the impression that they did not want to be asked anything and wanted to be left alone. This sentiment was mainly expressed through gestures, facial expression, or avoidance. In ignoring my presence, some volunteers clearly revealed that they were not interested in the research. In these situations it was important not to be obstructive, and to respect the participants’ “right to withhold their support for the research, to refuse to participate, or to withdraw their consent at any time in the research process, and [...] to remind them of this right whenever it may appear that they are likely to become uncomfortable with any aspect of the researcher’s presence” (Ethical Guidelines ASA 2004: 2).

In this study I have aimed to focus on the experiences of the volunteers in particular. This meant that I often paid them more attention than the other persons they were working with, many of whom were young children. This presented another ethical challenge as I often found it difficult to negotiate the appropriate amount of attention given to the children, as I did not wish to make them feel left out or ignored.

Overall I felt immersed in the research during fieldwork and the writing up period to follow and I am grateful for the cooperation received from all the research participants and the interest and support expressed by most. In retrospect I think the fact that I was a student from overseas made it easier for me to integrate with the volunteers since we had something in common. Most of them were also students in a similar age group and foreigners in Cape Town. These factors seemed to have a positive impact in the way I was received by the majority of volunteers. I got the impression that my own ‘foreignness’ also affected the way I was received and treated by the staff and principals. I believe the fact that I was faced with the challenges associated with being a foreigner resulted in the staff giving additional support for my work.

Chapter 3: Understanding the Gap Between Expectation and Experience: Motivations Behind Volunteering and How They Affect Volunteer Success

What leads individuals to take part in volunteer programmes abroad and what do they expect to get out of the experience? When trying to understand the increasingly popular activity of volunteering abroad, the motivations and expectations of volunteers need to be taken into account in order to see whether – and if so, how – they affect both the volunteers' and recipients' experiences. In this chapter I interrogate the relationship between the volunteers' motivations and initial expectations and their actual experiences. As this chapter will illustrate, significant personal benefits are gained by volunteers through their volunteer experiences. I argue that individuals participating in volunteer programmes abroad¹³ almost always benefit significantly from personal and practical experiences, irrespective of whether their initial expectations concur with their actual experiences. Furthermore, I will illustrate how the volunteers' attitude, namely, enthusiasm, commitment and interest in their work, is often the deciding factor in achieving positive outcomes for both the volunteers and recipients, irrespective of their relevant qualifications and practical abilities.

While the first part of the chapter focuses on the individuals' motivations to volunteer abroad, the second part highlights the volunteers' initial expectations and perceptions of their role as volunteers compared with the experiences gained in the field. The chapter will illustrate that the impetus to volunteer is usually combined with expectations about both the experiences to come and the physical destination.

3.1 Categories of Motivation

My investigation into the reasons behind volunteering coincide with the findings of other researchers, that they are based on a wide range of motives and that individuals usually chose to volunteer for more than one reason (Clary & Snyder 1999; Wearing 2004; Callanan & Thomas 2005). These may range from altruistic motivations to hopes of personal development (Wearing 2001: 65). The volunteers' motivation to travel also emerges as important and can even play a key role in the offering of their services in another country.

¹³ The opportunity to take part in volunteer programmes abroad strongly depends on the funds available and thus such opportunities are usually limited to people who predominantly come from the so-called First World as they are usually able to afford such programmes.

What guides a person to volunteer in social service institutions? In approaching this question, Clary & Snyder (1999) argue that people volunteer for a variety of reasons such as giving back to their own communities, meeting new people, remaining active (especially if retired), assisting others and so experiencing a sense of value and meaning. Various theories have been developed in order to explain and understand human motivation and many studies have focused on how people decide to use their time and energy (Di Rodio 2002: 55). Since volunteering can be described as an activity in which individuals give their time freely, volunteerism suggests non-monetary motivation for offering time and energy. While common definitions of volunteering suggest that volunteer work is in general an act of giving time freely for the benefit of others, Smith (1981) highlights that a volunteer is stimulated and encouraged by expectations of some sort of essential or 'psychic' benefit (Smith 1981: 23). Some authors argue that volunteer work is an activity which is 'paid' in a different way from receiving money (Unger 1991: 71; Wilson & Musick 1997: 698; Wearing 2001: 67-68). The costs of volunteering are often compensated with profits of a personal kind, such as acquiring status, developing the self, improving one's skills or human capital. Volunteering can thus be understood as a reciprocal – even if not equivalent – exchange of giving and receiving.

Based on informal conversations and semi-structured interviews, this chapter explores the various motivations of the volunteers with regard to their past experiences, the value they give to volunteering, and their knowledge of South Africa. The diverse ranges of motives given by the volunteers are presented in five categories¹⁴: personal growth, helping others, travel/adventure, reciprocal exchange and professional development. The statements below are based on the volunteers' answers to questions asked in the interviews, which include: Why have you chosen to volunteer? Why in South Africa? And what was your personal aim? Their interview answers were compared with informal statements and with my observations gathered in the course of fieldwork. All the volunteers indicated more than one goal and their answers are categorized accordingly and in the order of importance as expressed by the volunteers.

Personal Growth

Personal growth can be understood as a process of learning, self improvement and the acquisition of different life skills, in this case through voluntary activities. In discussing

¹⁴ The chosen categories are partly based on the motivation categories for volunteering given by Wearing (2001) since the themes he identified match well with the responses of the volunteers in this study.

matters around motives for volunteering, Gann¹⁵ (1996) states that voluntary work is, to a great extent, carried out in order to develop oneself.

Based on his study of an ecotourism rainforest project in Costa Rica, Wearing (2001) highlights the importance of personal growth through the experience of volunteering. His informants, mainly tertiary students with an average age of 21-22, mentioned for example the wish to “build [their] own character, confidence and self-development”, “[...] be more independent and self-assured and sure about who [they are]” and that “[...] there is that personal development aspect” (Wearing 2001: 67).

In the 1990s the psychologists Clary & Snyder made various contributions to the understanding of what motivates volunteers. In their investigations they determined different motivational functions served by volunteerism. In the context of personal growth, Clary & Snyder (1999) refer to “enhancement” as a main function defined in the context of volunteering, where “[o]ne can grow and develop psychologically through volunteering” (Clary & Snyder 1999: 157).

In this study too, personal growth – in combination with other categories – was the category mentioned most frequently by the volunteers interviewed. Their aims and expectations were often based on experiences that they hoped would result in personal development and personal growth. When asking the volunteers of both groups about their motivation during the orientation week, they often stated that they hoped to gain from their social interactions while volunteering and to become more mature and focused in life. The following are examples of typical answers:

What I am hoping is to grow from the trip. I know it's a cliché and it's kind of broad but that's all I can say. I hope to grow from this trip.

The experience to be away from home is very important. That will make me a stronger person. One can develop oneself and become more relaxed and more open-minded towards other cultures [translated by the author].

I want to have a nice time and experience as many things as possible and take what I have learnt back home with me. I really want to gain experiences that will help me in the future [translated by the author].

These statements illustrate the aim of personal benefit from the volunteer experience. The statement “to gain experiences that will help me in the future” relates to the fact that Carol, a volunteer from eKhaya finished school just before she came to South Africa. Carol further stated that she has never travelled so far and has never been away from her parents for more than two weeks. She was attracted by the challenges of a

¹⁵ Gann carried out a number of support projects between 1992 and 1995 and worked with different voluntary social organisations in the UK. His focus was on changes in the voluntary sector and how these changes were addressed by voluntary organisations.

volunteer position. Many state that leaving home for a couple of weeks to live in a foreign country far away is a huge and frightening step in their lives and the potential for personal growth can certainly be seen as reason enough to pursue the position as a volunteer. Indeed, most volunteers return home feeling more confident about themselves having achieved things they'd never previously imagined possible. Such transformations can be linked to a re-orientation in life and often achieved through facing such a great and far away challenge (see Turner 1969). It is fitting, therefore, that many volunteers take up their positions upon completing high school or just before graduating from university. Furthermore, the number of opportunities available to young people who have graduated from high school is enormous. The motivation to make use of these many volunteer opportunities often also depends on monetary factors. Someone who has just graduated from high school and is academically eligible to enrol at university, for example, may not have the funds to do so and may then choose volunteering as an alternative means to gain worldly experience and personal growth. In the case of Carol, for example, who had just graduated from school in Germany, the choice to come to South Africa to do volunteer work marked a transitional stage in her life and was an alternative means by which she hoped to learn about herself and find new direction for the future.

On considering the above statements from the volunteers, which correlate with examples given by Wearing (2001), one faces the question of where the idea arises that volunteering abroad can provide an opportunity for self-development. Participants in this project reported that they had mainly heard about the personal benefits of volunteer programmes from accounts of the experiences of family members or acquaintances. Popular conceptions about self-development through the altruistic offering of one's services in "developing" countries are also reflected in advertisements in magazines, newspapers or the World Wide Web. With regard to the growing number of volunteer programmes abroad and their advertising campaigns, individuals are inundated with various options of how to improve or give meaning to their lives. Volunteering is frequently promoted as an ideal way to give meaning to individuals' lives and to experience personal growth while simultaneously helping people in need (Butcher 2003; Callanan & Thomas 2005; Wearing 2001).

Most volunteer organisations themselves promote volunteering as a "life changing" experience which results in personal growth. However, individuals, who focus primarily on their own goals run the risk of losing sight of their volunteer tasks which can affect their service and impact the recipients of their work negatively (Callanan & Thomas 2005: 193). To avoid these kinds of negative effects it is important for volunteer organisations to explicitly clarify the volunteers' role in the field, focusing on the particular project and their voluntary service (Lauffer & Gorodezky 1977: 13).

Considering this factor, I argue in further chapters that the most helpful volunteers are those that learn to work in agreement with the institutions where they are placed, and focus on helping them reach their objectives and encouraging them in their work. In the course of the orientation week, both volunteer organisations repeatedly emphasized the importance of being open-minded in this way, and willing to learn from the institutions of placement in order to contribute positively to both themselves and to the recipients of their work. The Outreach manager in particular emphasised the volunteers' role as a serving role. He further highlighted that the volunteers should not come with the intention of changing South Africa or the institutions in which they work on their own impetus and according to their own values. In clarifying and making the volunteers aware of their role, he encouraged them to think critically about their reason for being there. Further along in this chapter I will illustrate how such explanations are very important as many international volunteers often come with conscious or unconscious ideas of "changing the world" (Wearing 2001: 66). The research participants did not generally state these kinds of ideas when asked directly about their motivations for volunteering, but such ideas frequently emerged implicitly when talking about their experiences (see below).

Travel and Adventure

There are different forms and ways of volunteering. This thesis focuses on volunteer work where individuals decide to work for a short period of time in a foreign country and thus requires that volunteers travel, often long distances. The excitement of experiencing different places and people and the passion for travelling and adventure are very influential factors for choosing to volunteer. The volunteer participants in this study were offered a variety of volunteer programmes in diverse countries but chose South Africa for different reasons relating to travel.

The majority of volunteers wanted to travel and see South Africa but also felt the need to engage in local activities. Whether this was combined with the wish for personal development or more altruistic motives differed from person to person. In an analysis of volunteer tourism Callanan & Thomas (2005: 184) suggest that volunteer tourists are given the opportunity to give meaning to their holidays when offering their services.

This certainly was the case with the volunteer participants I engaged with during this project. Most participants in this study stated that they enjoy travelling and meeting new people, experiencing various countries and growing to understand their different "cultures". Most had heard all kinds of positive things about South Africa from acquaintances, friends or family who had visited before. The stories and experiences had excited them and prompted them to travel to South Africa. Peter, a volunteer from Outreach reported that he had read several books about South Africa since he was young

boy. His interest in South Africa was cultivated by reading these books, which prompted him to visit the country.

Wearing (2001: 71) argues that volunteers with previous travel experience were always enthusiastic to broaden their experiences through further travel “due to the learning and adventure that they associated with past trips”. The statements given by volunteers in this project validate this point of view:

I love travelling and have been to so many places but this is the first time I came to South Africa [translated by the author].

It is the excitement of going somewhere you don't know. I think it is very exiting to be in a country like South Africa where things are not as straightforward as in Germany [translated by the author].

I actually wanted to travel after graduating from school. Going away is always such a great experience. I didn't want to stay at home. I didn't want to go away for an entire year but I also didn't want to go on a normal holiday [translated by the author].

I have travelled to various countries already, and it's always a great experience.

The reference to previous travel also supports that the volunteers are from the “First World” and hence privileged as previously highlighted.

The volunteers often reported in informal conversations that they had heard much about South Africa and had “always” wanted to come. Some volunteers mentioned the desire to come and experience the “real” Africa. South Africa seemed to be perceived as ‘in-between’ “exotic” Africa and the “developed” Euro-American homes of the volunteers, since most didn't expect too much difference from their regular lifestyles. One volunteer said that she did not particularly want to be in the bush and that because South Africa had been significantly influenced by “western” culture and commerce, it seemed to be the best choice:

I wanted to come to Africa at least once in my lifetime – as cliché as it sounds. I guess the descriptions that I have read on the website sounded like maybe I should go and try there, go there first and hopefully [...] visit a different part of Africa.

The common image of South Africa is of a country with a significant diversity of cultures, languages, and religions. Marketing material about South Africa, for instance, associates and presents the country with its “breathtaking” landscapes and mix of the “traditional” or “African” lifestyle with the modern. When asking volunteers to be more specific about what they meant by “traditional” or “African”, they frequently referred to

clichés of so-called African culture such as singing, drumming, practising different rituals, going to sangomas, and African dress. For some volunteers, coming to South Africa was the first step in their journey towards embracing their heritage. Some of the black volunteers mentioned the importance of coming to Africa at least once in their lifetime as the continent of their origin and of humankind in general. Laura, one of the black volunteers from Outreach, highlighted that everyone, regardless of skin colour, should visit Africa for this reason.

Helping Others

The category 'helping others' refers to the volunteers' stated desire to help and benefit others. This aim, together with the desire to travel, was often mentioned in combination with personal growth. This category is linked with behavioural patterns such as selflessness, altruism, social engagement and a sense of justice without expecting a reward. In the course of the research, I often heard very positive commentary from acquaintances about people who come to poor countries like South Africa offering their services for free, and many of these people thought about volunteering as something extraordinary, carried out only by very special people. In investigating who benefits from volunteering it emerges as important to look beyond that (surface) understanding.

Many studies have attempted to understand the reasons behind the choice of individuals to help others. A considerable number of studies on volunteerism highlighted altruistic motives (helping people, benefiting children or showing care) as main motivations for volunteering (Unger 1991: 74). Wearing (2001) speaks about altruism as one of the main motives, which includes certain levels of idealism. The different levels of altruism combined with idealism relate to concepts like "saving the world", "doing good" and "helping others" (Wearing 2001: 66). Such concepts also suggest the belief of being able or having something to offer. There have been a number of studies conducted around this concept, for example Wiehe & Isenhour (1977), Frisch & Gerard (1981) and Unger (1991), and these confirm that a primary motive for volunteering is altruistic (Clary & Snyder 1991). The following examples illustrate some of the respondents' stated aims in this regard:

I want to give time and effort to help out.

I want to pass down my own experiences to the children.

For me it is very important to do something that helps others instead of just thinking about myself and how to improve my own life.

I hope I can make a contribution to a community and maybe improve someone's life.

The fact that some volunteers in this study used their own savings to pay for attending their respective volunteer programmes can also be interpreted as an indicator of their altruistic motives. However, studies of volunteerism have also shown that the reasons for volunteering vary widely and thus focusing on altruistic motives at face value is problematic (Pio 2004: 27). In a more psychoanalytical approach, altruistic behaviour is related to individuals' inner conflicts, fears and doubts concerning their worth and competencies (Rosenham 1970; Clary & Miller 1986). For example, Paul, a volunteer from Outreach stated that:

[...] I feel a bit that we at university are not doing anything really. We are doing nothing for anyone else except for ourselves. And in the summer I don't want to make money, I want to help other people. So that's why I volunteered the last two summers as well.

This statement indicates Paul's attempt to escape from the everyday routine at university, where everything focuses on the individual's success, in order to experience a sense of being needed and being able to contribute.

Wilson (2000: 215) emphasizes that volunteerism's primary purpose is "to benefit another person, group, or organisation" but that it does not exclude volunteers from gaining from their activities. Wearing's study of the rainforest project in Costa Rica appears to confirm this, as volunteers in his study constantly referred to "altruism and travel/adventure as significant motivational influences" (2001: 70).

My empirical data, however, does not arrive at the same conclusion as Wilson's and Wearing's. Serving other people in order to benefit them certainly played a role in the motivation of volunteering but was outweighed by the wish for personal benefits. In the case of this study, altruistic motives were not mentioned often by the volunteers as a motivation to participate in the programme although the discourse of helping others was often referred to when they were questioned about the expectations they had for their work. The volunteers who mentioned helping others as a reason for volunteering almost always spoke about it as an additional factor to their motives of personal development. Even if the motive to help others was not their main motivation, their enthusiasm and involvement was indication of their inspiration to help others. The fact that some volunteers raised funds for the institutions or took over a sponsorship for a child subsequent to their volunteer work adds evidence to their motive of 'helping others'.

Nevertheless, the almost universal emphasis on personal growth as a prime motivation among these participants, suggests the influence of the 'personal growth

industry' on this generation in recent years. The phenomenal growth in this 'industry' over the last years becomes evident in the diverse and increasing opportunities and offers of self-improvement courses, life-coaching, self-development therapies, etc. that are advertised on the World Wide Web, magazines and newspapers.

Reciprocal Exchange

It is often assumed that people will only offer their services on a voluntary base if they profit from the exchange. Wilson (2000: 215) defines volunteering as an "activity in which time is given freely to benefit another person, group, or organization" yet emphasizes that this definition does not exclude the fact that volunteers can also benefit from their work. With Social Exchange Theory it is often assumed that the volunteers are the ones who are benefiting the most (Coleman 1990: 37). This is also supported by Smith (1982: 39) who suggests that individuals will not offer their services to other people unless they too benefit from doing so. The motive of self-interest to benefit from giving one's time and energy to benefit others is also suggestive of the studies of Mauss (1969) and his discussions around the reciprocal exchange of gifts. When talking about the circulation of wealth, Mauss (ibid: 72) argues that the process of giving is never "free of self-interest", and the obligation for the receiver to give back in return nurtures social bonds. He further argues that in the cases where there are no reciprocal exchanges, the giver adopts a superior position and the receiver becomes subordinated (ibid: 72). This notion of reciprocity with regard to international volunteering experiences suggests that existing power relations may be reproduced through volunteer exchange. On the one hand, international volunteers – privileged by class status and education – are in a position to offer their service without pay and, on the other hand, the need for their services is predominantly located in "developing" countries and institutions.

Yet in the case of volunteerism, that which the actors gain in return for their services does not necessarily have to be material. Benefits can be gained through rewards, through social contacts, and in the hope of improving professional and personal skills, as discussed above. There are also volunteers who offer their services because they have previously received help from others and want to "repay" their debt to society. Denise, a volunteer with Outreach, mentioned that her family had employed an au pair from an African country: Her experiences were very positive and she aimed to give that back to the children in her South African host family. Volunteering abroad, as Ellis (2007) argues, ideally is a people-to-people encounter in which both the volunteer and the recipients become 'familiar' with one another. The category of reciprocal exchange as a motivational factor for volunteering abroad became most apparent when volunteers spoke about their expectations of, and what they hoped to gain from, the volunteer programme.

In their advertising campaigns some volunteer organisations, most significantly the Peace Corps and UN Volunteers, highlight the aspect of “cultural exchange and understanding” as one reason to volunteer. The assumption is that even short periods of volunteering and working together enables those involved to gain insight into the world of the “other”. The fact that these particular organisations emphasise this aspect suggests their understanding of “cultures” as bounded, hence very different from each other, and therefore they view “cultural exchange” as removing barriers and promoting peace and understanding. Wolf (1982: 6) compares this common understanding of “cultures”, as “internally homogeneous and externally distinctive” objects, to “a global pool hall in which the entities spin off each other like so many hard and round billiard balls”. In these instances the popular use and understanding of the term “culture” is often problematic and needs to be critically reviewed. A common understanding of “culture” is that it encompasses all features of society, such as language, religion, rituals and costumes, and that it is bounded to specific peoples in their specific locality. “Cultures”, however, are not naturally restricted and static units (Wright 1998). As Wright (1998: 9) argues “cultural identities are not inherent, bounded or static: they are dynamic, fluid and constructed situationally, in particular places and times”. Thus, the use of the terms “culture” or “cultural exchange” by the research participants and their particular notions of “culture” needs be critically considered.

The link with new “cultural” experiences was often made by both volunteer groups and with an explicit expectation of finding distinct differences between “us” (the volunteers) and “them” (the local people), as the following statements illustrate:

I want to experience the life of the people here, especially how they live here. When you come here as a tourist you are not really able to gain insights into the real life and culture of the people [translated by the author].

[...] you will live with a local family; emerging yourself in the local culture.

I want to learn about South Africa and its culture.

I like to be in a host family because we get first-hand insights in the real life of the people here and their culture. It is different than staying in a hostel where you don't experience the way they ['black Africans'] live [translated by the author].

I hope to learn more about South African culture. Especially when I start working in the crèche I hope to learn new games and stuff like that. I also hope to see the differences in the educational system here compared to Europe [translated by the author].

From the interviews and the informal conversations, experiencing a different “culture” – mostly in combination with personal growth and travel – was a significant reason for volunteering abroad. The above statements clearly illustrate the volunteers’ vague use of the term “culture”. This was also evident in my observations. When joining volunteers in town, for example, I observed that some particularly enjoyed the African craft markets and bought a lot of this craft, often mass produced specifically for the tourist market, (e.g. figures, masks, drums, or bead work) as they wanted to buy something as a reminder and reflection of South African “culture”, even though most of these products are not used in everyday South African life and are frequently imported from countries further north.

In the context of “cultural exchange”, research participants emphasised the benefit of staying with a host family over the period of their volunteer work, being engaged in the work of local institutions and becoming involved with their staff and beneficiaries. For a limited period, thanks to these factors, the volunteer can form social relationships with the host family, staff, students and other volunteers. Thus volunteering can help to form social ties (Wuthnow 1998: 149).

The extent to which the volunteers integrate into the host family and the community does not depend only on their degree of open-mindedness, but also on how they are perceived by the locals. Whether the volunteer participants in this project formed a relationship with their host families or not varied. Some volunteers stated at the end of the programme that they built up “good” relationships with their host families. With the volunteers from Outreach the good relationship between many volunteers and their host families was made evident when some of the host parents invited other volunteers or even the whole volunteer group to their homes for dinner, a braai or simply to spend time together and to get to know each other. My observations at their farewell party on their last day further supported this: I observed a very emotional atmosphere with a lot of hugging between the volunteers and their host families and the representatives of the schools in which they’d worked, as well as joking around with each other like old friends, the giving of advice to the volunteers by members of their host families as their own parents might normally have done, and crying because the volunteers had to leave. Even though transport was organised by the organisation, some host parents insisted on accompanying “their” volunteers to the airport.

Professional Development

This category of motivation relates to the improvement of professional skills and the desire to gain experience in a particular field of expertise. Professional development may also refer to the development of possible career opportunities.

Most studies on the subject indicate that professional development is included among the main reasons that individuals volunteer (Wilson 2000; Wearing 2004; Clary & Snyder 1999; Gann 1996). As indicated above, the motivation to gain professional experience is usually coupled with one or more of the other motives. Clary & Snyder (1999: 157) highlight the career function and argue that "[t]he volunteer has the goal of gaining career-related experience through volunteering". The motivation to gain career-related experiences and skills became particularly apparent when asking the volunteer participants about their original expectations, before they had started their projects:

I am doing psychology and I also know that it is important to at least be exposed to different cultures. And I know that here I will be given that opportunity. So that will broaden my way of thinking and broaden the way of perceiving the world.

The reason I am volunteering is that I want to make sure that education is what I want to do. And so I figure if I do it in summer [during vacation] I can get some taste before. I'll actually plunge first into it and feel the water a little bit.

I want to study education so that's why I first want to experience the work with children and find out if it's the right thing for me [translated by the author].

Volunteer programmes offer participants the opportunity to gain practical experience in different fields. The research participants of this project had the opportunity to carry out various tasks such as assisting teachers in their classes, acting as substitute teachers, playing with children, and feeding and changing nappies of the younger ones. Gann (1996) argues that through volunteering individuals can gain valuable experience from executing certain tasks that would sometimes take years to gain through a job. Gaining valuable work/professional experiences through their volunteer work was stated as a goal at the beginning of the projects by the volunteers of both groups:

[...] I want to gain practical experiences [as a teacher] and improve my English [translated by the author].

I want to gain experiences in my field of profession and hopefully enhance the gained experiences.

Especially the people who are teachers who come here, I think they will bring a lot back home to their schools.

In most cases, programmes that accept volunteers do not require special skills or previous work experience. Most of the individuals who participated in the volunteer programmes studied did not have a formal qualification. In investigating international

volunteer programmes, Callanan & Thomas (2005) found that only 32 out of 252 volunteer projects required a professional teaching qualification. In 83 cases it was stated that the programme would be suitable for young people and only three of those required tutoring experience (Callanan & Thomas 2005: 194). Thus the authors question the quality of the learning experiences of those the volunteers teach. The fact that volunteers do not generally need any previous experience or qualifications¹⁶, is also an indicator of unequal power relations between “developed” and “developing” countries. This aspect of volunteer tourism is related to the idea that people from “developed” countries can contribute their skills and knowledge to “developing” countries, even if they are unskilled. This was also apparent from the wide variety of volunteer opportunities offered mainly in “developing” countries. Some individuals have also reportedly been willing to spend the extra money in order to travel to “developing” countries and gain experiences or new skills due to legalities restricting their participation, as unqualified teachers, in institutions within their home countries. Schools in Germany, for example, will not allow unqualified teachers to help out or take over a class for a couple of weeks unsupervised. Only students who study education and have completed various exercises and internships in schools are accepted. In order to gain experience in the field, one has to be enrolled in a specific training programme at university.

It thus becomes important to question the seemingly loose requirements of acceptance into local institutions for volunteers, and the premises on which they are based. In approaching this issue, aspects such as power relations between the “developed” and “developing” world, popular concepts of development interventions, and ideas and preconceptions about “developing” countries need to be critically considered. I discuss these concerns in greater detail in chapter five.

3.2 Expectations vs. Experiences

In order to gain insight into the reasons why individuals decide to volunteer and why they do so in South Africa, it is important to examine their initial expectations. These expectations were as widely different as the motivations for volunteering, and varied from person to person. It was often difficult to differentiate between motivations and expectations and they frequently go hand in hand (see Schreyer & Driver 1989; Scherl 1994). For example, individuals motivated to volunteer in order to gain teaching experience are likely to expect that they will. The synthesis between expectation and

¹⁶ The Outreach manager, however, highlighted that their volunteers are carefully chosen. As the number of participants is limited, the organisation can choose from a large number of applicants. The organisation looks at people's experiences and education and chooses volunteers according to what is needed in the different programmes. The manager can make requests for people with certain qualification/skills such as computer skills, high math standard, etc. which will be considered by the organisation.

reality, however, is not always evident, and similarly volunteers' motivations are not necessarily based on their expectations. In the course of the fieldwork I noted that some participants were not able to express what they expected from volunteering. I was told by some volunteers that they did not really know what to expect and thus did not really have expectations. This changed during the course of their volunteer work; as they often were able to recognise their expectations as soon as something surprised them, and this was reflected in their comments about such surprises. After having worked in their particular projects for a couple of days or weeks, all the volunteers mentioned – and in some cases, complained – that they had not expected the institutions to be so “unorganised” and “unstructured”. This illustrates both that there is often a discrepancy between volunteers' expectations and experiences, and that expectations regarding volunteer work are not always understood consciously by volunteers.

I really thought it would be more outlined, what we were doing. I was really surprised how unorganised it was. I mean our living situation was organised, where we were teaching was sort of organised. But when we got here it was sort of, like, 'do what you feel like you need to be doing'.

I was expecting that it would be an organised programme where it is clearly outlined what we need to do. So that we've a sense of purpose and can work towards it.

I don't know what I necessarily expected but I expected it [the lifestyle] to be more different. Like it is very similar to the way my parents live at home

The last statement indicates the notion of “culture” and “cultural exchange” as discussed above. Despite all the volunteers noting that the institutions were unstructured and, in some cases, that their tasks were not clearly defined and did not meet their original expectations, the majority reported that they nevertheless learnt a great deal from these experiences. This sentiment is captured in one volunteer's statement:

It's has been an absolute experience. It's forced me out of a box, to be flexible - because as far as lesson planning goes, we don't sit down together and plan for the whole week. It depends how much we covered that day. So it's day to day planning. And before, I would have just freaked out about it because I don't know what we are going to do tomorrow because we haven't done what it is we need to do today. So it demands flexibility and that kind of experience is very important.

Having experienced their placements in unstructured environments and comparing them with the educational institutions of their home countries, which they mostly defined as well-structured, many volunteers stated that they had never expected to learn so much in the course of their programmes. This again questions common perceptions as to who

“owns” knowledge and who is in a position to pass it on. Even if most volunteers expected to gain practical skills through practice, many did not expect to learn from people but to teach people. Only two volunteers, Ben from eKhaya and Sandra from Outreach, reported during interviews that they had come to South Africa expecting to teach children and staff and to bring them their knowledge but had, in the course of the project, discovered that they were actually learning far more from the students than they could teach them, as stated, for example, by Tanya, a volunteer from Outreach:

I came here really wanting to make a difference and bring all of my knowledge to help to make the educational system better. I never expected to learn so much from my students.

This statement does not only exemplify the unexpected but positive experience of learning from recipients whilst in a position to teach them; it also highlights the popular notions regarding the ownership of superior knowledge thus again exposing existing power relations between “developed” and “developing” countries: the knowledge of the “developed” world, also referred to as the North, is considered the most desirable and acts as a role model for the “developing” world, also known as the South. Additionally, this notion also suggests that the volunteers – representing the North – have the expertise to transfer their knowledge in order to help people in need, or as stated above “to help to make the educational system better”. Yet rather than transferring their knowledge, the volunteers help people in need by being an additional resource and providing a much needed additional presence and therefore assistance in a variety of ways.

The motivation to develop themselves and gain through personal growth often became apparent to the volunteers themselves during the course of their programme when existing perceptions surrounding ownership and value of different kinds of knowledge were thrown into question. When asked about their experiences in the field at the end of the programmes, many volunteers from both groups reported that it was only through their actual experiences and social interactions that they had become aware of expectations of personal growth. The following comments illustrate this realisation:

I didn't know what to expect. But after going through it for the past five and a half weeks, I think I want to grow as a person. [...] I am able to see things much clearer and it has also given me more confidence as a person – in myself and in being able to break down situations and see different perspectives and go through with it.

The learners enriched my soul and mind so much and I will never forget their sparkling eyes and big smiles.

The interactions with the kids, the teachers and also with the host family broadened my way of thinking and broadened the way of perceiving the world.

This trip certainly has made me more of an introspective person. I was already introspective, I like to sit down and think about the past, my life, people I have met and how they affected me and how I affected them, maybe. But especially on this trip I've been going on overdrive.

With regard to the aspect of personal growth, Wearing (2001: 124) notes that the social interaction between volunteers and people from a particular community, group and/or environment, "forms an exchange of influence that creates a social value" for the volunteer-tourist. According to Wearing (2001) this influence may affect the individuals' self and identity. The volunteers' responses presented above demonstrate that many volunteers felt that they had grown through or due to their volunteer experience in Cape Town. As Wearing (2001) notes, volunteer experiences can be considered as a development of self-identity, self-awareness and thus as "a learning process that relates to an individual's attitude to move forward and continually challenge, take risks or strive to better themselves" (Wearing 2001: 126). This concept of personal development relates strongly to the motivations and experiences of the volunteers in this study. For some volunteers, especially for the younger ones, this was embodied in the challenge of travelling to South Africa and living far away from home. Wearing (ibid: 126) further highlights that being away from familiar social groups and familiar surroundings frequently presents an opportunity to review and change one's identity. It was often reported by the younger volunteer participants that having been able to manage and cope in the field without their familiar support system was a challenging and intense learning experience, and that having survived it successfully made them proud of themselves.

During fieldwork I observed that these volunteers developed more and more confidence and became more proactive. This was reflected by their starting new activities, or getting involved in afternoon projects for the children, such as individual tutoring, sport activities or handicraft projects. In the course of the fieldwork, I experienced that the majority of participants spent a lot more time on their projects or on additional activities for children than their regular working hours. Their enthusiasm, commitment and the real interest shown in their work was, as I later demonstrate in chapter four, a great influence in the positive response to volunteer work by its recipients.

Personal growth and the development of self was considered to be very valuable by volunteers and encouraged them to stay positive, motivated and enthusiastic. I observed the positive effects of such development on volunteers most powerfully when they received attention or rewards from the children, parents or teachers, and their emotional reaction to thank-you letters from the students or positive feedback from

students' parents. This was also evident in their self-motivated decisions to offer additional classes or individual tutoring beyond the two week programme, in their free time. Once, twice or three times a week – depending on the available spare time – many volunteers offered additional English or math tutoring or sport activities (e.g. basketball) to the children in the townships where they were working.

Various authors state that volunteers need rewards in order to motivate them (Field & Johnson 1993; Lauffer & Gorodezky 1977; Wilson 2000; Clary & Snyder 1999). Lauffer & Gorodezky (1977) argue that if not through payment or promotion, rewards need to come out of experiences and relationships that volunteers develop with staff, clients or with each other. According to Field & Johnson (1993) individuals are more likely to stop volunteering if they do not receive such rewards. In the course of the research, I was repeatedly told by volunteer participants that the eagerness of their students and the joy of the children in the crèche when given attention kept them motivated and enthusiastic. The majority of volunteers from Outreach stated that this applied despite their feeling overwhelmed and burnt out at times. Being able to see the students' daily progress provided additional motivation and served as 'proof' to the volunteers that their contribution was valuable:

[...] it was their [the students'] eagerness and enthusiasm that keeps us going.

The kids loved it so that's why we loved it too.

It's so amazing. They [the students] really want to learn. That motivates us a lot and makes work much easier and more fun.

These statements were made at the end of the two week programme in the township during which time many of the volunteers expressed frustration about the fact that basic knowledge among the students was missing, that some students did not concentrate or that basic teaching material was not available. However, they stated that the gratitude shown by the parents at the end of the programme, as well as the progress the students made in the course, compensated for the frustration sometimes experienced by the volunteers.

For some volunteers, the motivation to travel kept their spirits up. In these cases their decision to volunteer was more motivated by the desire to travel than to volunteer. Since volunteer programmes abroad mainly place their participants in local host families, the combination of learning about "the local" and also managing to travel, is commonly perceived as more valuable than simply coming as tourists and is perceived as an opportunity to gain travel experiences whilst simultaneously developing oneself (Callanan & Thomas 2005: 184). The participation in a volunteer programme abroad is often

believed (and promoted) as having a lasting impact on the individual, compared to a package holiday that lasts two or three weeks. Many volunteers stated that they expected or hoped for experiences that would have a lasting impact on them. In order to find out the long-term impact on individuals who participate in such volunteer programmes, follow-up studies months or years later are required. None the less, for the research participants who participated in this study, the opportunity to travel combined with the experience of living with a local family and working on particular projects was at least believed to have long lasting impact and mainly in regard to personal growth:

You get to be here for more than 2 weeks. It's more than a vacation, you get to live with a family, you get to teach in a school every single day and see all these aspects. But you also on the weekends get to be a tourist.

Both volunteer programmes included sightseeing tours. The volunteers were given the opportunity to experience the advertised beauty of the country and to visit Cape Town's tourist attractions. This sightseeing aspect clearly served the travel and adventure element of the volunteers' motives.

To a certain extent, the level of volunteer expectations is reflected in the level of their activity. The volunteers who came with high expectations showed greater involvement than those volunteers with less. For example, Julia from Outreach, told me during the course of her programme that she had few expectations besides immersing herself in a completely different "culture". Julia was very aware about her limited position and influence as a volunteer in a short-term programme. The following statement clearly points out her position:

I am not going to save the world in five weeks. I am probably not going to make that much of an impact on the school. And I don't really think that they need our impact. I don't know, I don't think that there is all that much that we as Americans can do in a country that we have been in for a few weeks. So I think actually it's more like a learning approach than a teaching approach.

When asked about her work and how she got involved in the school she explained that besides helping out teachers and sometimes taking over classes, she did a lot of observing. She was more interested in local issues such as politics, HIV/AIDS, community, sports, etc. than trying to make any changes or improvements in the school. My own observations on her role in the school matched her own. She gave a lot of attention to the needs of the teachers, asking them if she could help yet remaining more observant than insistent.

Joanne, another volunteer from Outreach, who is 27 years old and a qualified teacher of five years, said she wished to do something that goes beyond the eight week programme. She was placed with two other volunteers in a very small school which suffered from a lack of space, staff and resources. The school where she was placed has, amongst other shortages, very few books for their students, most of which are donated and out-dated and in the course of the programme she started a special book project for the school. She asked the principal and teachers to write down the names of the books that were needed and, on completing a list of about 120 books, she set up a book 'wish list' on the website of a South African book store. Anyone wished to buy a book for the school could sign up and order a book online. Once the book arrives at the shop, the school was notified to come to collect it. As Joanne commented:

I've been looking for a project to head at the school that might have a more lasting impact than our sessions with students [...]. I ran it by the principal and am doing my background research to ensure that it has the biggest impact for the school with the lowest expense. One of the biggest challenges that the school faces is not having appropriate/enough books available in the library.

By the time the volunteers left the school had already received one third of the books listed. Joanne has also decided to sponsor one of the children's education and this particular child has been given the opportunity to study at a school with better resources. This case illustrates the immense impact that a single volunteer can have on a child's educational and life opportunities.

I was told by the eKhaya manager that there have been very few cases of volunteers who decided to sponsor a child but that almost all volunteers donate various items to the institutions in which they have worked or give gifts directly to the children. I observed that the volunteers from both groups were constantly using their money to buy much needed materials and equipment to the benefit of both the children and the institutions. Joanne's book project idea was taken on by Marlene, another volunteer from Outreach, who then started the same project at the school where she was placed. The enthusiasm shown by all participants reflects the volunteers' willingness to make material contributions to their institutions by donating money to buy various resources. This does not only influence the way the volunteers are perceived by the recipients, as I demonstrate in chapter four, but also that they are benefiting local institutions materially in addition to their actual volunteer work.

3.3 Crime: A Disturbing Factor

During the volunteers' stay in South Africa, crime became a tangible and disturbing factor in their experiences and work. Even though the volunteers were informed by their particular organisation and had heard about the crime situation in South Africa in advance, the majority did not expect crime and personal safety to be as threatening. In both programmes, the volunteers were advised (for security reasons) by the programme managers to walk in groups and not alone – especially when dark – and not to walk around with money showing or cameras, cell phones, moneybags or any other valuables. While the manager from Outreach was very serious when talking about the crime situation, the manager from eKhaya gave milder warnings. I observed that some volunteers from Outreach, who received the very serious warnings, were more concerned and afraid of crime than those from the other group and some volunteers took the warnings about crime and security in South Africa more easily than others. There were a few crime incidents, and a few volunteers expressed that they felt constantly threatened:

I didn't expect to feel this apprehensive about my safety. I am constantly alert of my surroundings and it can be exhausting at times.

The experiences with security and with the discrepancies between life and how people live have been so shocking and so emotionally draining that that's something you can experience only for a little while without going crazy.

I am very aware wherever I am. I am very aware of who is behind me, who's to my right and left and where my wallet is.

[...] crime definitely affected us. We had a few incidences of crime, five incidences of muggings and robbery. It really did shake our morale. Whoever had any romantic notions of the Cape Peninsula was probably brought down to reality.

The fact that safety became such a big issue among the one group seemed to produce more solidarity among them. Fear of crime, however, also put the volunteers in a more isolated position relative to people outside their group. Some volunteers stated that they were very cautious wherever they went and did not really know who to trust and thus did not trust anybody. It made them sad and frustrated, but many stated that they were very scared and felt that they had to exercise extreme caution. The crime situation obviously had an impact on the experiences of the volunteers and how they perceived life in South Africa. Only one participant mentioned in an interview that the high crime rates in South Africa were scary but that they made her experience more exciting in a desirable way.

3.4 Conclusion

The volunteers that participated in this study noted a variety of motivations and expectations that had prompted them to take part in volunteer programmes in South Africa. Many, however, stated that their initial expectations were quite different to their actual experience in the field. For instance, all of the volunteers interviewed expected the institutions in which they worked, and their tasks as volunteers to be more structured. Despite this factor, however, all participants agreed that they gained many new and positive experiences. Even those that had first hand experiences of crime concluded, at the end of the programme, that their good experiences had outweighed the bad.

While some volunteers noted at the end of the programme that they were ready to go back home, others said that the programme was too short and that they would like to stay longer. It was also mentioned by most participants that it would probably take some weeks or maybe months to process and absorb all the insights and impressions that they had gathered in South Africa. When asking whether or not their expectations were met, it was, in most cases, very difficult for them to answer. It was commonly stated by the volunteers that they felt somewhat changed, but could not yet define clearly in which way. This tentative response is no doubt accurate and sensible and suggests that it would be most worthwhile to undertake a follow-up study of volunteers if the effects and purported benefits of volunteering for volunteers are to be properly assessed and understood. This chapter has analysed the volunteers' motivations, their expectations and what they experienced in the field. It has shown that in most cases the reasons for volunteering in South Africa are based on a wide variety of motivations. Many volunteers mentioned more than one reason for participating in a volunteer programme in South Africa and there often existed a link between volunteers' motivations and expectations.

Whatever motivated the participants, whatever they expected to be confronted with, the participants of both groups insisted that the positive experiences they have gained have gone far beyond their expectations. Despite the observation that there are many aspects of volunteerism that reinforce the power differentials between the "First and Third World", this was not the intention nor experience of either the volunteers or the recipients, young or old. The overwhelming response of both 'sides' of this volunteerism is that volunteers from abroad make a positive contribution to their own lives and to the institutions in which they are placed through their work, as the following chapter further illustrates. The only way to assess the full impact of volunteerism beyond the ability of this project, however, would be through follow-up studies of both populations several months after the completion of the programmes.

Chapter 4: Perceptions Surrounding the Benefits of International Volunteer Workers in Cape Town

There exists a widely held belief that the services of volunteers are needed, especially in “developing” countries, and this idea is promoted by many TV, magazine and internet advertisements. The promotion of volunteerism extends to volunteer tourism. Callanan & Thomas (2005) argue that the growth of volunteer tourism is partly a result of the intensification of volunteer advertising, and partly the increased desire of many people to travel. Individuals who decide to offer their services freely in order to help the “underprivileged” in foreign countries often do so with the belief that their services are greatly needed, and that they will be warmly welcomed by the people and institutions for which they will be working. As one volunteer who participated in this study stated: “I thought they would be really happy to have us here and that we came to help”. In this chapter I explore whether this perception is in fact consistent with reality. I present and analyse feedback given by students, parents, principals, teachers and caregivers regarding how they perceived and experienced the presence of international volunteers, and whether they thought it beneficial. Since the focus of my research was predominantly on the volunteers themselves, the insights in this chapter are somewhat limited, and are constructed from the additional data that I gathered during research in order to give voice to the parties on the receiving end of the volunteerism sector. I argue that besides the benefits of volunteering for the international volunteers themselves, volunteer programmes frequently succeed in their advertised purpose by successfully contributing to the advancement of local social services.

By examining the data I gathered during fieldwork, I discuss, critically, the way in which international volunteers are perceived by those on the receiving end of their work. I discuss the positioning of volunteers in underprivileged institutions in South Africa – i.e. mostly those catering for underprivileged black children – and argue that this positioning supports and reproduces common understandings of development intervention. I further argue that the attention given to children and staff from the volunteers of both of the groups that I studied affected their reception positively. In this chapter I conclude that the volunteers were mostly perceived in a positive light, and that many people on the receiving end of their work felt that they had gained from working with and learning from them.

4.1 Students' Responses and Responsiveness towards Volunteers

Most students participating in the two-week programme (Phase I)¹⁷ offered by the volunteers from Outreach were highly motivated to participate in the English, maths and/or computer courses, and also showed a lot of interest in the volunteers working with them. The fact that the volunteers were from different countries was an important contributing factor to the enthusiasm of the students. Most of the students that participated in the two-week programme as well as many of the students of the different schools where the volunteers were later placed were excited to meet people from other countries, and were eager to ask the volunteers – mainly during the breaks or after class or course time – many questions about their home countries. Their excitement was evident in their exuberant gestures, raised voices and eager questions. In the Outreach programme, the excitement of the younger student participants was especially palpable, and they asked the volunteers all kinds of questions about America. Many of the questions referred to a stereotyped understanding of foreigners, for example 'Are all Americans rich and party all the time?' 'Have you ever met a movie star?' I recorded similar observations in the other schools where volunteers were placed and I noted that the students' excitement and curiosity did not diminish during the course of the programmes. Whenever I visited the volunteers at their placements, they were always surrounded by students asking questions and seeking their attention. In addition to the students' excitement at meeting foreigners, the fact that the volunteers had the time and energy to be more attentive to them than their regular teachers also affected the attention given to them by their students.

During the course of my fieldwork I observed that many of the students attending the voluntary two-week programme in their school holidays were also motivated and eager to learn. They were attentive during the lessons taught by the volunteers, worked really hard and were disciplined and surprisingly quiet most of the time. This latter point was especially notable since there were about 40 students in one big room with different courses taking place simultaneously. When questioned about the programme the students all reported on the volunteers positively, highlighting how much they had learnt from them. The computer courses, which were only possible thanks to the volunteers' involvement, were particularly popular and students regularly stated that they would have a better chance of finding a job on completing the course. This certainly proved true in one particular case where a student found a job because he could demonstrate that he had taken the two-week computer course. Without the volunteers, the computer course could not have been offered for free and he would not have been able to attend and thus to fulfil

¹⁷ The approximately 40 participants in the two week programme consisted mostly (about 2/3) of primary school children, as well as a few high school students and some adolescents who had dropped out of school. All are residents of the township where the programme took place.

the skills requirement for the job. In this instance the volunteer programme certainly had a direct positive impact on an individual's work prospects and livelihood.

The appreciation of the students for the volunteers is apparent in the self-motivated thank-you letters given to the volunteers and Outreach by some of the students who participated in the computer course. Extracts from these letters demonstrate the students' gratitude:

I thank you for sending volunteers to teach us computers. If you know computers you get many opportunities and it helps you with your school work. I would appreciate if you guys do it every year so that the other children would get this opportunity we had. I have learned how to do almost everything, copy, pasting, colouring, centre, bold letters, emailing, typing and making capital letters, mostly researching on the internet.

I just want to thank you all, you are doing a brilliant job & I learn how to check my email box, research, type faster, & to do a Curriculum vitae and etc. I learn a lot from you; I hope you will do the same to others next year. I'm really appreciating your excellent work & I'm speechless.

I just want to say thank you about this course and I enjoy it and I learn a lot of things in this course and if you can do this next year I would like to join again because I real enjoy your course.

These letters confirm the motivation and appreciation of the students as I observed it during the course of the programme. The students also thanked the volunteers after each class and often highlighted how much they had learnt. In agreement with the students' reports, the volunteers and parents said that the students had learnt a lot and improved their English, maths and computer skills in the course of the two-week programme, despite its short length, and this concurs with a statement made by Outreach's manager:

I think that the training you can get in ten days of daily tuition can give you a familiarity with computers which then allows you to go on and do much more. Or it can help you with key questions. And I think probably quite a lot of English can click into place and confidence can click into place over the course of two weeks. So I think although it is a short time, you know, it's intense and it can have excellent effects.

The positive impact on education by volunteering initiatives argues Smith (1994: 248), is confirmed in many previous studies (see also Clary & Snyder 1991). Brudney (1999), for example, demonstrates the effectiveness of volunteering in public schools in the United States using various surveys conducted in the 1980s and 1990s by the Gallup

organisation¹⁸. His research on tutoring concluded that students had benefited in both academic and non-academic areas from volunteer work, and were subsequently more confident, more motivated and showed a stronger self-awareness. It was further demonstrated that volunteers assisting teachers in classrooms also had positive effects on the students by providing a greater source of scholarly attention (Brudney 1999: 228).

In the context of this project, the programme manager of Outreach stated that the “super positive” attitude of many of the American volunteers, who tend to be “super positive”, may also have had a positive impact on the students’ motivation and self-confidence. He stated it was useful for students

[...] to have someone who believes in you and who emphasises your individuality. The kids tend to have a group mentality and children don’t easily express themselves as individuals and don’t easily think about who they are and what they want to do in life. Whereas Americans are very individualistic and believe in the individual and they encourage people. So that, I think, is very helpful. So I think [the volunteers provide] very positive role modelling.

A volunteer from eKhaya also reported the positive effect that introducing new games or songs had on the children, who found them exciting. During my visits I regularly experienced the excitement of the children when learning a new song, whilst simultaneously begging the volunteers to teach them the next one. The volunteers of both groups often reported that their students especially enjoyed the additional activities¹⁹ (e.g. handcrafts, crayoning, tutoring in English and maths, basketball) offered by the volunteers of both groups during or after school hours. This is supported by the large numbers of children who participated regularly in these activities.

There is, however, also the possibility that close relationships between volunteers and children can have a negative impact on the children, especially when the interactions occur over such a short period and this needs to be taken into account. If a child becomes very attached to and develops a strong relationship with a volunteer, the child may experience the volunteer’s leaving as very distressing and harmful. This is more likely to occur in the case of younger children who may not understand the reasons behind a volunteer leaving, and may believe that they are in some way responsible for feeling abandoned (Tillmann 2003: 208). It is important to consider both the positive and negative impacts of such relationships on children – especially in the case of children who come from problematic family backgrounds, are neglected or abused, or suffering chronic

¹⁸ The Gallup Organization, founded in the 1930s and a worldwide leader in the science of survey research, is in the forefront in developing new research models and methodologies.

¹⁹ There is a paucity of extra-curricular activities offered in government schools in under-privileged areas because of the inadequate resources from the state to pay for them and parents in these areas (unlike in more affluent areas) are too poor to add to school fees and other schooling costs.

disease, all of which is not uncommon in the unprivileged and poor areas where volunteers often work, as the children may be particularly vulnerable to the negative impacts of such a separation. In consideration of this potential problem some institutions do not accept short-term volunteers.

The benefits of volunteer work for children and students are very difficult to measure, especially in cases where the children are very young. Practical and ethical aspects, such as gaining permission from parents to work with children for research purposes or ensuring that a child is aware of the research situation, often limits the access to the child's perspective as a research subject. As a result I have relied largely on feedback from teachers, principals and parents to evaluate whether or not children benefited from interaction with the volunteers. Nevertheless, as stated by the manager of Outreach, the impact that volunteering has on the children remains "[...] extremely hard to measure, although we do know from some cases of feedback from teachers, that they had a big impact. But we don't know 99% of it".

So while I remain unable to measure the effects of the volunteers' presence on the younger children accurately due to the reasons mentioned as well as my limited time in the field, I am able to assert the ways in which it benefited the children's carers and teachers (see below).

The impressions gained from observations in the school classes were different to those gained in the course of two-week programme run by the Outreach group. In most cases, the school classes were very loud and undisciplined, and thus difficult for the teachers and the volunteers to control. According to some teachers, however, the students were far more disciplined when the volunteers attended the classes and paid a lot more attention to them.

Many of the teachers and one of the principals further noted an additional advantage of having volunteers help teach or assist classes as an opportunity for their students to learn "cultural" activities. As in the two-week programme run by Outreach, many of the students appeared to be proud to be taught by people from a different country, and paid greater attention to them. I observed this myself in one of the after-school basketball courses offered by four volunteers from Outreach. Even though basketball is not a completely new activity for South African children, the fact that those running the course were American was considered something special. While waiting for the course to start, one student told me that she really enjoys the lessons because they are taught by Americans who "know how to play basketball because it is an American sport". Other children agreed about the privilege of being taught by American "experts". In the course of the training I also observed the huge, proud smiles that lit up the children's faces each time one of the volunteers complimented them. These observations seem to

reflect popular ideas as present in movies and on television, about Americans superiority in areas such as sports, as many of the children did not in fact know whether these particular volunteers possessed the skills they attributed to them.

The volunteers also provided material benefit. Some, for example, brought gifts (e.g. toys, supplies and materials) for the children as is also mentioned in Irvin's thesis on Volunteer Tourism (2006: 55). As pointed out in the previous chapter, two volunteers also started a book project for the schools. Joanne from the Outreach programme has decided to sponsor the education of one of the children, and other volunteers have shown a great interest in trying to raise money to enable their students to take part in international sport tournaments. There is clearly willingness among the volunteers to offer more than just their services even though this is not required or even explicitly encouraged, including limited financial support.

The examples above clearly illustrate that the school children as well as the children in the crèche do indeed benefit from volunteer work. These benefits, however, have to be considered with reservation as their scope is difficult to measure. Many of them are on an emotional and supportive level which can impact strongly on the children but nevertheless remains quantitatively intangible.

4.2 Parents' Responses

In the course of the two-week programme (Phase 1) offered by Outreach, parents of the children participating in the programme were asked to fill out evaluation forms. The two-week programme had included a reading programme that had been introduced to the volunteers before they began teaching. I did not have direct contact with the parents, and the evaluation forms thus provided me with an opportunity to "hear" the parents' voices and opinions. I was, however, acutely aware that most parents were isiXhosa speaking and either unable to speak English at all, or speak it only as their second or third language. On analysing the evaluation forms it became clear that most of the parents had needed help in answering the questions. As a result, the wording of some of the responses was unfortunately identical, and some of the forms had been filled out in the same handwriting. Other responses indicated that meanings had been lost in translation. These factors need to be considered when reading and analysing the information presented below.

The evaluation form (see Appendix 2) refers directly to the reading programme. It includes six questions about this programme; for example, 'Has your child enjoyed the holiday programme?' or 'Do you think the lessons have helped your child?' The responses to these questions were all positive, with most parents indicating that they thought the

programme was very helpful, their children had enjoyed it, and that they saw progress in their children and would like the programme to continue:

The lessons helped her [the student] very much. Everything has improved and I wish she could get more lessons.

Thank you for helping our children. Now I am sure that I can take my son to an English school because of you. I hope you will come back again.

I noticed improvement in my child because before she was not reading clearly but after she joined the programme she is able to read correctly.

The evaluation form also included a section for other comments and suggestions. The answers in this section were not given in response to questions, but reflect the parents' opinions more freely. The following are some of the comments given by the parents:

Volunteers thanks for giving good teaching for our children. You gave us teachers, nurses, doctors, etc. for tomorrow. Volunteers you must not go back we need you.

My girl is picking up a lot from you guys. Even at school you are our best helpers. With my heart I thank you guys. Keep up the good work.

I don't know how to thank you about teaching my son. You help him a lot about the lessons. May god almighty bless you all. Many thanks.

Thank you all of you for helping our children. It means a lot to me. I think is not a last time, we wish that you can come back again.

I think you must do something that can keep our children coming to the lessons everyday.

I want to suggest that it will be nice if each and every holiday they are going to attend. Also I want to say thank to you for everything you have done for my child.

The responses from the parents illustrate that they greatly valued the two-week programme provided by the volunteers. They also reflect the sentiments of their children, as expressed in the children's thank-you letters. Whether the parents' statements are a reflection of what they themselves think, or what they have been told by their children, is not clear. Nevertheless, the parents' statements demonstrate their wish for their children to participate in educational programmes in order to improve their learning skills, as well as their expressed gratitude towards the volunteers and their work. Many of their statements indicate that the volunteers' presence gives parents hope for an improvement

in their children's education, and that they would like them to continue teaching their children:

[...] you must not go back we need you [...]

[...] I would like the volunteers to help us here.

[...] please don't stop because it helps [...]

These statements express the need and desire for the continued presence and work of the volunteers over a longer period of time. In the context of post-Apartheid, the hope for equalising growth and betterment of social services, such as education, has remained unfulfilled for the majority of South Africans (Gelb 2003: 22). Thus, the appreciation and hope for support often rests on people who offer their services voluntarily as reflected in the parents' statements above. These statements further reflect the high value the parents place on education.

On the last day of the programme, the volunteers organised a function for the students and their parents at which the students received achievement certificates. The ceremony was very festive, and the volunteers congratulated the students, handed over the certificates and gave a summary of the two-week programme for the benefit of the parents. After the students had received their certificates some of the volunteers said a few words about the "incredible experiences, which they will never forget – and with amazing, eager children who were very enthusiastic to learn". Their speeches were emotive and left some volunteers, as well as parents, in tears. After these speeches, the parents in attendance were given the opportunity to respond to the volunteers. Many verbally expressed their appreciation of the willingness of the volunteers to travel all the way from America to encourage and support their children. The parents' oral feedback during the ceremony reflected the positive responses in their evaluation forms. The ceremony ended with the parents singing and dancing for the volunteers in demonstration of their appreciation. The volunteers were visibly moved by the parents' feedback.

4.3 Teachers', Principals' and Caregivers' Perspectives

The popular and far-reaching assumption regarding the need of "less developed" countries for volunteer help often legitimates unrestricted participation of volunteers in social projects and institutions (Callanan & Thomas 2005). These institutions, which may indeed have need of additional staff, may also feel forced to accept any kind of help due to a desperate shortage in human resources.

In the course of this research, I gathered opinions regarding this matter from the teachers, principals and caregivers involved. The following is a brief summary based on informal conversations, interviews with two of the principals, two written letters from teachers and my observations made when visiting the volunteers at work.

The overall feedback from the principals and teachers was positive. As is common in most South African public schools, the schools where the volunteers were based suffered a shortage of teachers, and their use in addressing this problem was frequently mentioned in feedback from the schools. As one of the principals interviewed noted:

[...] we [have] had a long relationship with volunteers over many years. Simply, the reason is that we have a lack of manpower within our school situation. We don't have sufficient teachers to do all the necessary tasks that need to be done.

This statement demonstrates that the volunteers were seen as important in providing relief for the problem of staff shortages. Teachers and caregivers confirmed this and welcomed the volunteers for the additional manpower they provided. The scope of their help in this capacity is broad and often personal, as illustrated in the following story told by a principal from one of the participating schools:

As it happened this year, strangely enough, these volunteers arrived just in time because one of our teachers broke her leg. And they [two volunteers] stepped into her class immediately - they took over her class. They walked in and could do that for us. We didn't have to employ someone; we didn't have to have funding or find money for that. They could take over any other classes. They would team-teach with many of the other teachers. So in that respect they also did magnificent work.

In this particular case, Peter and Lisa, volunteers from the Outreach programme, were acting as substitute teachers. While the principal was very glad to have the volunteers do so, Peter and Lisa admitted to initially feeling overwhelmed by this unexpected task and responsibility, but in the course of the programme said that they had become more confident in their abilities. As previously mentioned, however, one needs to question whether these volunteers, who were still college students and formally under-qualified to teach, could adequately take on the role of teachers, and what impact their inexperience may have had on their students. For the principal, however, it was enough that the students in school were supervised and kept busy with their assignments. In the context of such an under-staffed and impoverished school, the principal was indeed correct to value the help of the volunteers as it meant that the students could be kept busy and did not have to be sent home. Even if the volunteers were not qualified teachers, they were able to stand in for the teacher, not necessarily to teach but at least to supervise the

students, and in the context of such extreme lack of staffing resources where a comprehensive education is often considered a luxury, this could only benefit the students.

In discussing the advantages of working with volunteers, Lauffer and Gorodezky (1977: 10) also suggest that volunteers can release paid staff from some of their usual administrative type tasks and thus provide them with sufficient time to focus on and carry out tasks that are aligned with their particular proficiency. Lauffer & Gorodezky (1977), as well as Merrill (2005), stress that using volunteers can extend the services provided by social institutions, as well as enable paid staff to concentrate in greater depth on their expertise, projects or clients. In course of my observations this certainly seemed to be the case as I noted two different ways in which the staff of the institutions made use of the volunteers: some of the staff took time out to have a break or do some administrative work that was usually done after hours while the volunteers minded their students; while others used the volunteers to help facilitate more 'proactive' activities with students, such as group activities and games that they would not have been able manage alone. In both cases, the volunteers alleviate the teachers' work load and/or huge number of students. Supporting the teachers with additional staff was very much welcomed and greatly appreciated.

The benefit of this aid was also reflected in statements of some teachers and caregivers:

[...] with our volunteers we are able to create a better educational environment for our children.

[...] to have pupils been tutored, two pupils at a time being tutored in the reading programme, we need additional manpower. That's where the volunteers come in.

They [the volunteers] were most helpful, doing playground duty and looking after our classes when one of the staff members was away ill.

They [the volunteers] were eager from the beginning to be active in the classroom, where they helped out with reading, doing flashcards and even, with guidance from the educator, giving an odd lesson here and there.

Through volunteers we've been able to set up our library, which is well run. That we would not have been able to do without the assistance of volunteers.

The statements clearly reflect the idea that with the use of volunteers, social services can be extended. For example, one school was able to offer additional programmes such as individual tutoring, which allowed more attention to be paid to

individual students needing extra help; another school could set up their library due to time given by volunteers for sorting and arranging books; another volunteer (as mentioned above) was able to support the school by starting the special book project.

When asked about the value of having volunteer workers in schools, the programme manager of Outreach stated that, in addition to the relief provided to the staff, they also give relief to the children, especially to those that struggle in school:

[...] the schools are under funded, the class sizes are too big and it's just encouragement to the staff as well as gives a bit of relief to have extra hands and help for the children that are falling behind, because there is no real support system for the children who are struggling.

Despite the afore mentioned benefits of having volunteers work in under-privileged schools, institutions that accept volunteers need to be aware that the training and supervising of volunteers can also be very time consuming (see Brudney 1993; Ellis 2007; Manser & Cass 1976; and Lauffer & Gorodezky 1977). This was mentioned by one of the principals, who told me that he requires a longer commitment from volunteers for this very reason. In addition, as he stated during an interview, he is concerned about the potential damage that volunteers can cause when they are not 100% committed and/or only volunteer their services for a short period. The school works with several local and international volunteers, but the principal usually requires that they commit for a period longer than just a few weeks:

You cannot, for example in the hero project [a form of narrative therapy explained in chapter one], have someone coming, develop a relationship, and then two months down the line they decide it's not really what they want. It is terrible for the child and very often our children have been disappointed so often in life. Life has given them so many disappointments they don't need any more. So there has to be that commitment from the volunteer to stay at least for a certain period of time.

The three Outreach volunteers that had placed at his school, however, stayed for only five weeks. The principle said that he had agreed that they could work in his school in this instance and capacity for the following reasons: Firstly, he had the impression that the programme was very well organised and that the programme manager demonstrated his professionalism in the way he introduced the programme. Secondly, he liked the fact that the volunteers had been introduced to the reading programme during their first two weeks (Phase 1) and could continue the programme with the students at the school. Referring to the Outreach programme he said that:

We essentially had nothing to lose but everything to gain. [The programme] seemed to be well organised and had everything on track.

With regard to both volunteer programmes, the institutions also did not need to recruit volunteers themselves, as this was done by the programme managers and staff. Furthermore, I observed that the institutions did not train the volunteers as such, but gave supervision when they needed them to assist. Some volunteers complained about this aspect, saying that they had not been properly introduced to their tasks and were sometimes just thrown into the classrooms and left to manage 40 students. The above comment, however, also reflects Callanan's & Thomas's (2005) concern that underprivileged institutions are forced to accept any aid that they can get, even if it is not entirely beneficial or has negative repercussions. This was evident in the statement "we essentially had nothing to lose", despite the fact that the conditions of the volunteers help at the school did not meet his preferred commitment requirements.

Both principals stated that it is also very important that the volunteers come with the right attitude, and said that the work of volunteers who believed that they knew how to do everything better than local teachers because they came from Europe or America was doomed to fail:

[...] if they come with an idea that 'we are coming to solve your problems', then it's not going to work. [...] it's all about attitude. One should be saying "how can we learn from you and how can you learn from us". I think it's the mindset, it's the attitude of the volunteers themselves how they approach the actual project. If that mindset is right and a person is able to get on well with everyone else, it just eases the whole process.

In the course of my research I found most the volunteers to be very open-minded in this regard and readily accepting of the tasks allocated to them. In asking them about what they felt to be the correct attitude for their kind of work, they gave the impression that they thought it important to demonstrate their role as a volunteer discreetly, and to serve the institutions rather than to come with the idea of bringing them improvement. This generally concurred with my observations of them. The relations between staff and volunteers that I witnessed were generally amiable, as reflected in their mutually positive feedback where both sides reported their experiences of the other as positive.

I observed only one case where a volunteer from eKhaya seemed to be impacting on the local situation negatively. During visits to various volunteer placements with Carol, a staff member from eKhaya, we observed that the presence of this volunteer – whom I shall call Stella – was creating a disturbance in one of the crèches. Stella said that she felt overwhelmed by the work and did not know how to deal with the children, and was visibly unhappy. We observed her acting distantly with the staff – sometimes ignoring their

questions and at times ignoring the children. When asked if she had spoken to the staff at the crèche or eKhaya about her problems, she responded that she was waiting for someone who would come and speak to her about the situation and to place her somewhere else. While we were talking to her, the manager of the crèche seemed to become agitated, and kept looking at us, cleaning up around us, and asking if everything was “fine” whilst looking very worried. Carol and I both got the impression that the volunteers’ attendance was confusing everyone in the crèche, staff and children alike. It was not clear what or who was the catalyst of these problems. Since neither staff nor Stella wanted to talk about the problems it was very difficult to analyse the situation. Whether it was Stella’s attitude that was disturbing or staff was not welcoming and she felt that she was not in a well supported environment can thus only be speculated on, but the fact that she had not yet spoken to eKhaya about her unhappiness and asked for a different placement is somewhat worrying and needs to be addressed as Stella’s position was evidently making both her and the staff at the crèche uncomfortable. In the course of my research, however, this was the only incident where the presence of an international volunteer seemed to be having a negative impact.

As assumed by some staff members from eKhaya but also stated by one of the principals, the institutions and recipients do in fact benefit from volunteers who bring their knowledge and skills from “developed” countries in order to transfer it to local people. Chambers (1997: 76) discusses global power relations and knowledge transfer. According to Chambers, knowledge transfer can be characterised by top-down type of transfer within the modern global society. Global power relations are predominantly controlled by the North which has monopoly over power over knowledge production. Through development initiatives, including those in which these volunteers participated, professional knowledge is transferred from the North to the South. The role of international volunteers with regard to development interventions and the impact that they have on their recipients is the subject of the next chapter.

4.4 Volunteers’ as Victims of Crime

Crime in South Africa is prevalent and often violent, and can negatively impact volunteer programmes. Volunteer organisations need to consider the safety of volunteers when organising placements in institutions and families.

The fact that some of the volunteers were victims of crime during their stay reflects how they were perceived by local criminals. This criminal attention concurs with the common perception held by South Africans in general that American and European visitors are rich. In the case of the volunteers that I studied, who paid a lot of money to come and volunteer in South Africa, their presence certainly reinforced this perception.

The crime situation in South Africa is a complex issue, influenced by various factors including poverty, unemployment, inequality and South Africa's segregated (Apartheid) history. Space constraints do not allow me to elaborate this complexity but in addition, the crime experienced by these volunteers relates partly to the generally high incidence of crime in the country and partly to their foreignness, rather than to the aspect of their volunteerism. It is therefore relevant to their overall experience of being in South Africa, rather than affecting 'benefits' and is included in this chapter only because, as foreigners working in underprivileged areas, they were perceived by criminals as particularly vulnerable – and this is a pertinent issue for volunteers, the programmes that bring them and the organisations that host them.

4.5 Conclusion

As demonstrated in this chapter, the contribution of the international volunteers, especially when including the appropriate levels of enthusiasm and commitment, was viewed as positive by the staff in the schools where they were working. I also noted that the fact that most of these schools were under funded with oversized class sizes was liable to negatively influence the motivation of the permanent teachers many of whom reported that they had to work under frustrating conditions. They found the volunteers' motivation and their enthusiasm to be encouraging to both them and their students. Many factors, such as the volunteers' commitment, a positive attitude and ability to interact positively with children, needs to be taken into account in order to ensure that the volunteers' contributions are indeed positive. In the course of my field work I found that these factors were generally positively realised, and that the presence of the volunteers was not only useful, but also generally appreciated – all except for one case where the volunteer was unhappy, perhaps because she did not feel adequately qualified for her position and therefore felt unable to contribute positively.

Chapter 5: Why Work with International Volunteers?

In discussing the successes and failures of development projects, Ferguson (1990) argues that they often result in implementing changes that have little to do with their original goals, which are typically aimed at alleviating poverty. Instead of addressing the poor and bringing about real changes of their life conditions the results of development project often end up benefiting those who already are in power. According to Ferguson (1990), therefore, it is important to question the actual achievements of development initiatives in addition to who applies them and who exactly they benefit.

International volunteer interventions take place predominantly within so-called developing countries. In order to address their specific social, political or ecological situations – often in a way that extends to economic development – many programmes focus on fighting poverty and resulting problems, such as the restricted access to social services (Callanan and Thomas 2005: 193).

In the previous chapters it has been discussed who exactly it is that benefits from the work of the international volunteers participating in this study. This chapter deals with the question of exactly how the work of international volunteers in the South African context is advantageous for and benefits its recipients.

5.1 Volunteerism in South Africa

On International Volunteer Day in 2004, the head of UN Volunteers in Africa emphasized the history of volunteerism in South Africa, “I’m very impressed by the spirit of Ubuntu [an African philosophy of shared humanity] present here, the country really has an incredible history of volunteerism” (World Volunteer Web 2004).

In their study on service and volunteering in South Africa²⁰, Perold et al. (2006: 11) present South Africa as a country with “a rich history of voluntary service that promotes the public good beyond the family to the local community”. The type of voluntary service that Perold et al. (2006: 11) speak of is characteristically informal and includes mutual support through kinship or social networks that encourage shared responsibility and reciprocity. This mutual responsibility or social giving is predominantly present within poor populations that have found themselves in positions of poverty due to the persistent legacy of the country’s Apartheid history.

²⁰ Conducted between 2005 and 2006 this was part of a Five-Country study on service and volunteerism in Southern Africa by the Global Service Institute at the Centre for Social Development, Washington University, St. Louis, in cooperation with Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA), and the Centre for Social Development in Africa at the University of Johannesburg.

The richly documented history of volunteerism in South Africa also described by other authors (see McKendrick 1998; Potgieter 1998; Sewpual & Holschler 2004), appeared at first to conflict with present day realities as experienced during the course of this project. As noted by one of the principals during an interview:

South Africa doesn't have a tradition of volunteerism. We really haven't. We have had a sort of a master-slave type of relationship. You were forced to volunteer. And that type of difference we need to change. We need young people that say 'I will not work for money, I want to learn something'. And you only start doing that by giving them role models.

This perception might, however, be particular to the principal's own experience with volunteers. The school has worked with international volunteers for nearly ten years now and also offers student exchange programmes. It can be assumed that through these programmes he is more in contact with international than local volunteers. Furthermore, his reference to the "master-slave" dynamic seems to refer specifically to the Apartheid era relationship of legitimised inequality between white and non-white populations in South Africa, and this needs to be taken into account. The principal's conflation of Apartheid era systems based on racial classifications and enforced segregation with volunteerism, which is the willing offering of one's services for free, is problematic: it fails to recognise the voluntary services that were in action during the Apartheid era that took place within the different racial classifications of the Apartheid government; and secondly, classifying forced labour as volunteerism is a misrepresentation.

The principal also seems to suggest that the promotion of volunteerism in South Africa would require the facilitation of a change of attitude from Apartheid-era experiences to those where students are willing to work without payment in exchange for personal experience. According to him, international volunteers consequently serve as role models by coming to South Africa and offering their services for free, and in the case of the volunteers studied for this thesis, even paying for the experience. In emphasizing the volunteers' function as role models, he overlooks the fact that many people are unable to offer their services for free as they are required to work in order to earn money to cover their basic needs. For example, the volunteers were placed in educational institutions with underprivileged children and students, and the difference between the opportunities available to the volunteers and recipients of their work is so vast that they are not, in the context of this project, even comparable. The international volunteers were able to offer their services in South Africa for free because they were either supported by their parents, had saved enough money to support themselves, or were under a particular scholarship programme from an American organisation. All volunteers, even those who were already employed, came during their holidays and thus did not miss out on their salaries. Rather

than serving as role models for young students in terms of their capacity as volunteers, therefore, the volunteers' involvement, I argue, was more encouraging and beneficial for the recipients in as much as they were able to offer them the opportunity to participate in useful courses, tutoring classes or even leisure activities.

Additionally, volunteers also need a level of skills, and this can limit the realm of their volunteering potential. As a result, voluntary services are generally provided by those who are already skilled and have time to spare, to those who are not. The recipients of volunteering initiatives are usually unskilled, and have limited resources and opportunities which they focus mainly on strategies of survival. In South Africa, poverty and inequality was greatly exacerbated by the state-legislated oppression and segregation of the Apartheid era, which for many years prevented the upward social mobility of the majority of the population, and this has further exacerbated poverty in South Africa (Frankental & Sichone 2005).

Ironically, however, in their survey about civic service in South Africa, Everatt and Solanki (2005) found that poor people were more likely to volunteer than richer people and they argue that there is a higher incidence of mutual responsibility among poor people. Other studies also stated that the socio-economic profile of the volunteers tended to correlate with their area of volunteerism: poor volunteers tended to help their own people, whereas volunteers from richer, industrial societies and from a more privileged socio-economic background offer their services to people poorer than themselves (Patel 2005; Gillette 2003; Voicu & Voicu 2003; Flick, Bittman & Doyle 2002; Reisch & Wenocur 1984). Voluntary work of the former kind, however, is not usually recognised as such, and certainly seems to be overlooked as valuable voluntary action by the principal that I have quoted above. Usually, where there is reciprocity among the poor, it is in the expectation that some day the givers (of help) are likely to be receivers, whereas the kind of voluntary activities I have discussed are mistakenly assumed not to have an expectation of personal benefit.

In the case of South Africa, Perold et al. (2006) argue that social services provided within communities are usually combined with the promotion of religious values, such as mutual responsibility, as found in Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. This extends to values of charity and care of the less fortunate by the more fortunate (Perold et al. 2006: 12).

Considering the documented history of the above kind of volunteerism in South Africa, the question as to what exactly international volunteers can do for locals that is needed and benefits their situation, becomes pertinent.

5.2 International Volunteers as Role Models?

When discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the involvement of international volunteers in local contexts, however, an important aspect emerges. In the context of South Africa's past and the major inequalities resulting from the racial segregation of Apartheid, South African society is still deeply divided. These inequalities – that still present largely along the lines of the hierarchical categories of race enforced during Apartheid, where the black population of South Africa was systematically, legislatively disadvantaged – are reflected in the restricted access to social services such as education and/or material resources for the majority of South Africa's black and coloured populations (Frankental & Sichone 2005: 248).

Referring to Frantz Fanon (1963), whose work influenced many anti-colonial and liberation movements and who spoke about the “colonized mind”, the indoctrination of black people by white colonial ideologies of white superiority became embodied in the psyches of black people themselves, who began to think of themselves as inherently disadvantaged with a limited access to opportunities and success. Fanon was deeply concerned by “one major legacy of colonialism and imperialism, the paralyzing inferiority complex of blacks and their abject idolization of whites as their role models” (Ranuga 1986: 182). Fanon's revolutionary writings were based on the idea of stimulating the physically and emotionally colonised people of the “Third World” to build up and regain their self-confidence, dignity and freedom (ibid).

With regard to South Africa's history of segregation and in agreement with the volunteer manager of Outreach, I support the idea that the encouragement gained by disadvantaged people from the experience of having individuals who care about them and are willing to offer their services for free, can be beneficial. However, one can only know more about the actual benefit through follow-up studies.

To a certain extent, the volunteers can also serve as role models for the people they are working with, role models of generosity, empathy and achievement. This is particularly true in the case of the two week programme in the township run by Outreach (see chapter 4) and has certainly become evident in the students' and parents' responses discussed in the previous chapter. The parents' responses to the volunteers clearly illustrate their appreciation of the volunteers' encouragement but also indicate their hope for the chance of better education for their children because of the course the volunteers taught. It seems, therefore, that the hope imparted to disadvantaged people who are caught in a cycle of poverty by the involvement of these volunteers and through their human empathy, is an integral part of the volunteers' work.

The enthusiasm and encouragement shown by the international volunteers might not only affect the disadvantaged people with whom they work. The volunteers can also

serve as role models for more privileged South Africans. That there still exists an attitude of segregation in the minds of many South Africans is suggested by the Outreach manager: In his view,

That level of commitment [to sponsor individuals, to try to get sponsorships for books or to try and raise money for kids to go and take part in international tournaments] showed by these foreigners, I think really puts to shame the surrounding white communities.

I have certainly also experienced some reluctance on the part of white South Africans in volunteering their services to the disadvantaged communities on their doorsteps first hand. This became evident in the many informal conversations I had with white South Africans and the fact that most volunteers I worked with in my year of volunteerism in an orphanage in Cape Town were from abroad. However, it will be interesting to see if the new black elite gives anything back to poorer people of the same colour.

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that all white South Africans are unwilling to volunteer in poorer, predominantly black areas. Indeed, volunteering among white South Africans is not uncommon. There are various organisations where white South Africans are involved in volunteer work. The 'Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisation' (SHAWCO) at UCT is only one examples where South African students of all colours and classes involve themselves in educational or medical projects in poorer areas.

From a more critical perspective, however, it is also important to consider that the use of international volunteers as role models in countries with a high poverty rate appears somewhat problematic as it supports ongoing perceptions of unequal power between the South and the North, and frequently, between black and white. It demonstrates that resources, like those often required to enable volunteering, are not equally available to everyone and that (predominantly white) people from overseas are more privileged and better educated than those locally. These power relations, although often not consciously realised by volunteers, can also manifest in their relationships with local people and institutions, especially when volunteers impose their ideas about the "correct" or "advanced" way to do things.

5.3 International Volunteering and Global Power Relations of Inequality

Post-development critics focus on development interventions that are carried out by the so-called developed nations, which present themselves as offering the ideal paradigm of teleological "advancement", often to the detriment of local and alternative ways and ideas about achieving well-being and success (see Cavalcanti 2007; Escobar 1995; Mies 1994;

Sachs 1992, Rahnema & Bawtree 1997). In discussing concerns surrounding development interventions, Escobar (1988) as well as Cavalcanti (2007) argue that it is important to reflect on “development” as an ideologically constructed conception. Poorer countries were defined as “underdeveloped” (a term that immediately puts them in negative contrast with “developed” nations) for the first time when President Truman termed them as such in his inaugural address before congress in 1949 (Rahnema & Bawtree 1997: 291). Unknowingly, he had presented a conceptual model that would shape development practices and ideologies for decades to come. He had created a vision of a fragmented globe, in which it became the duty of the “developed” world to “help” the “underdeveloped” be more like it. This frequently involved the implementation of global capitalist economies that extended the potential for American markets, often to the detriment of more socialist economies. The concept of development has come to characterise the relationship between Northern “First World” countries (the “developed”) and the Southern “Third World” countries (“undeveloped”) (Escobar 1988: 429). When talking about the concept of development Escobar (1988: 429) argues that:

The aim of all the countries that emerged with this new status in the global concert of nations was invariably the same: the creation of a society equipped with the material and organizational factors required to pave the way for rapid access to the forms of life created by industrial civilization. Articulated around a fictitious construct (“underdevelopment”), a discourse was produced that instilled in all countries the need to pursue this goal, and provided for them the necessary categories and techniques to do so.

The discourse of development has become rooted in the minds of the general population and is rarely questioned outside of academia. In his critical analysis of the development industry in Lesotho, Ferguson (1990: xv) argues that the success of development interventions is based on “the institutionalized production of certain kinds of ideas” and that these ideas have a great impact on the created structural changes. Escobar (1988: 429) takes a relational position when he states that:

[...] poor countries became the target of an endless number of programs and interventions that seemed to be inescapable and that ensured their control. Everything that was important in the social and economic life of these countries (their population, processes of capital accumulation, natural resources, agriculture and trade, administration, cultural values, etc.) became the object of explicit calculation by experts formed in new sciences developed for that purpose, and the subject of interventions designed by a vast array of newly formed institutions.

In agreement with Irvin (2006), I argue that the principles of volunteer tourism or volunteering abroad, which take for granted the idea that people from “developed”

countries are empowered to make a contribution to “developing” countries, maintains the unequal conceptualization of development. There exists a common perception and belief among people that development needs to be planned and organised by “developed” nations. The statement made by one of the principals, who suggests that institutions and recipients benefit from volunteers who bring their knowledge and skills from “developed” countries (quoted in the previous chapter), demonstrates the persistence of this perception. The teleological notion of development was also referred to in a number of informal conversations that I had with teachers and volunteer staff during my fieldwork, where I was told that having volunteers from Europe or America benefited the institutions by allowing individuals from “developed” countries to share their knowledge and skills with institutions in “developing” countries. An example given by Irvin (ibid) also refers to this dichotomy by suggesting that development has to come from outside “developing” countries. In an interview with the volunteer programme manager of eKhaya, Irvin (ibid: 69) quotes:

International volunteers [...] have various skills and experience which adds great value to local projects. I would say that the specific impact that international volunteers make is the fact that they come from a developed country and local people feel privileged to have foreign volunteers assisting in locals projects and interacting with local people.

These perceptions often also refer to conceptions of “traditional” knowledge versus that of “modern” knowledge, where the latter is valued above the former. The widespread assumption that people from the “developed” countries impart better knowledge and have the expertise to help the poor maintains existing inequalities by naturalising them and consequently, development interventions that come from outside “developing” countries are unproblematic and justified (Hobart 1993: 2). From a development point of view the need for international volunteers becomes unquestionably necessary.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have critically discussed the question as to what exactly international volunteers can do for locals that is undoubtedly beneficial. It has become clear that work with international volunteers can be advantageous and valuable, both for its material and educational benefit and through the volunteers’ engagement. The chance for learners to participate in additional courses, tutored classes or leisure activities offered by the international volunteers was one of the greater benefits (as illustrated in chapter 4).

Whether international volunteers are also beneficial in serving as positive role models has been discussed from different perspectives. While one of the principals

highlighted that the volunteers serve as role models for young learners, the manager of Outreach thought they served as role models to the more privileged white South Africans that often do not involve themselves in the problems of poorer, black areas. South Africa's history and the persisting inequalities amongst different racial groups need also to be taken into account when considering this latter point. Whether the encouragement gained by disadvantaged people from the experience of having people who care about them, is in fact beneficial, can only be explored through follow-up studies.

However, when discussing the role of international volunteers and whether their work is beneficial for the recipients, existing unequal power relations between the "First and Third World" and how these are reproduced through such volunteer programmes needs to be considered.

While the analysis of such power relations and how they are reproduced are very important for the understanding of development and power relations in the world, they matter very little to people 'on the edge'. Due to the desolate situation, especially amongst the majority of black South Africans, means that all assistance and help is beneficial and welcomed in fighting the recipients' struggle for survival. Thus, the positives for the recipients seem to outweigh any negatives; but the organisers of the volunteer programmes should not exaggerate those benefits. Furthermore, they might encourage volunteers to volunteer in their home countries, and colleges and universities, sending student age volunteers, should also appreciate the nuances, subtleties and 'dangers' of privileged people working with seriously disadvantaged people.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

Basis on studies of two organisations that offer volunteer programmes in Cape Town, 'Outreach' and 'eKhaya', I have aimed to explore what motivates young individuals to volunteer, why so many chose to do so in South Africa, and whether actual experience matches advance expectations. The study also gave insights into the local institutions' and recipients' attitudes towards and appreciation of the volunteers' presence. The dual analysis of both sides of the volunteering phenomenon in the social sector is most useful in that it gives insight into the "real" need for the presence of international volunteers in these locations, and has demonstrated that volunteer-abroad programmes can provide access to positive experiences for the international volunteers and can also better the social and economic situations of local institutions and individuals.

As illustrated in chapter three, volunteers who participated in the fieldwork research of this project, predominately students, were motivated by a variety of experiential and moral hopes in their volunteer work – such as personal growth, travelling, the helping of others, "cultural exchange" and professional development. The multiple reasons mentioned behind their participation in these volunteer programmes and in South Africa frequently correlated with the international volunteers' expectations of their experience. Even though these initial expectations did not always match the actual experiences of volunteering, it became clear during the course of the project that the volunteers in this study nevertheless benefited greatly from their volunteer experience.

Despite the motivations with regards to helping the less advantaged and/or breaking down cultural boundaries, it further became clear that hoping for personal growth is a primary motivation in advance of the experience, and seen as a primary benefit during and after the experience. At the same time, the altruistic aspect of the experience reduces this seeming self-interest and the travel component satisfies the adventurous inclination and the belief that engaging with cultural difference enhances understanding. The possible contribution towards professional development adds an instrumental element and is likely to appeal to parents in the case of younger volunteers, and may offer a welcome change from their usual occupations in the case of older volunteers.

The long term benefits of volunteering on the volunteers themselves, however, is a matter that surpasses the time restrictions and enquiry of this project and will certainly make for interesting further research. Evaluating their experiences after a few months would provide additional information about the impact of the programmes and it may be of particular interest to explore whether the volunteer experiences have led to any changes or had an impact on the volunteers lives and if so, what kind of change or impact that

would be. For instance, it would be of interest to explore whether or not the volunteers' thoughts, feelings and/or behaviours and, in the case of students, perhaps career plans, have changed as a result of what they have seen and experienced during the programmes abroad and if so, how. This would require long-term studies before, during and after the volunteer programmes.

The volunteer programmes studied in this project not only benefited the volunteers but also the recipients of their work. As demonstrated in chapter four, the contribution made by the international volunteers, most particularly their enthusiasm and commitment, was not only welcomed but also very much appreciated by the local institutions and individuals who were on the receiving side of their work, as is evident in their positive feedback. Various aspects, such as the lack of staff in the institutions where the volunteers were placed, the additional attention that was given to the students by the volunteers and the solidarity volunteers demonstrated towards the less privileged people they worked with, were some of the most salient reasons given for volunteers' welcome.

On the basis of my study of the two volunteer programmes Outreach and eKhaya, I have therefore come to the conclusion that the work of international volunteers certainly contains advantageous aspects, on both material and educational levels. It has become clear, however, that this very benefit often reproduces the existing and unequal power relations between the volunteers and, in extension of them, the "developed" world, and the recipients who represent the more impoverished "developing" world. However, the encouragement gained by disadvantaged people from their interaction with the volunteers, can, in my opinion, be very beneficial and outweighs, if not out-does, this concern. Again, however, the long term benefits of such programmes remain to be explored through follow-up studies several months after the completion of the programmes.

Additionally, the organisations through which the volunteers find their positions play a central role in the way the volunteer programmes are organised, which volunteers are recruited and the selection of the institutions to receive their aid, and present a field for further exploration. The investigation of these organisations would provide important insights into how they select and recruit volunteers and host projects, the aims and objectives behind their involvement, and whether these are in agreement with those of the volunteers and recipients.

The best outcomes of international volunteer programmes, I argue, can only be achieved when the volunteer organisations work together with the receiving institutions whilst considering the needs and wishes of both the volunteers and recipients.

References

- Adler, P. and P. Adler (1998). Observational Techniques. In Denzin, N. and Y. Lincoln (Ed.) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. London: Sage Publications.
- Bernard, H. R. (1995). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: Altamira Press.
- Butcher, J. (2003). *The Moralisation of Tourism. Sun, Sand ... and Saving the World?* London: Routledge.
- Brudney, J. L. (1993). Volunteer Involvement in the Delivery of Public Services: Advantages and Disadvantages. In *Public Productivity & Management Review*, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 283-297.
- Brudney, J. L. (1999). The Effective Use of Volunteers: Best Practices for the Public Service in Law and Contemporary Problems. In *Amateurs in Public Service: Volunteering, Self-Learning and Community Service*, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 219-255.
- Callanan, M. and S. Thomas (2005). Volunteer Tourism. Deconstructing Volunteer Activities within a Dynamic Environment. In Novelli, M. (Ed.) *Niche Tourism: Contemporary Issues, Trends and Cases*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Cavalcanti, J. G. (2007). Development Versus Enjoyment of Life: A Post-development Critique of the Developmentalist Worldview. In *Development in Practice*, Vol. 17, 1, pp. 85-92.
- Chambers, R. (1997). *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the Last First*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.
- Clary, E. G. and J. Miller (1986). Socialization and Situational Influences on Sustained Altruism. In *Child Development*, Vol. 57, pp. 1358-1369.
- Clary, E. G. and M. Snyder (1991). A Functional Analysis of Altruism and Prosocial Behaviour: The case of Volunteerism. In *Review of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 12, pp. 119-148. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Clary, E. G. and M. Snyder (1999). The Motivations to Volunteer: Theoretical and Practical Considerations. In *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol. 8, pp. 156-159.
- Cole, J. (1987). *Development and Underdevelopment: A Profile of the Third World*. London: Methuen.
- Coleman, J. (1990). *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge: Belknap Press.
- Coles, R. (1993). *The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Darvill, G. and B. Munday (1984). *Volunteers in the Personal Social Services*. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Dewalt, K., B. Dewalt and C. Wayland (1998). Observational Techniques. In Bernard, H. R. (Ed.) *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. London: Alta Mira Press.

- De Wet, J. and Z. Erasmus (2005). Towards Rigour in Qualitative Analysis. In *Qualitative Research Journal*, Vol. 5, No.1, pp. 27-40.
- Di Rodio, W. (2002). An Exploration of the Concept 'Motivation' as a Tool for Psychotherapeutic Assessment. In *Practical Philosophy*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 55-62.
- Eadington, W. R. and V. L. Smith (1992). *Tourism Alternatives: Potentials and Problems in the Development of Tourism*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Ellis, S. (2007). Voluntourism: Pros, Cons & Possibilities. Available online: <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/browse/volunteering-issues/vacation-volunteering/doc/voluntourism-pros-cons.html> [19 May 2007].
- Escobar A. (1988). Power and Visibility: Development and the Invention and Management of the Third World. In *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 3, No. 4, pp. 428-443.
- Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ethical Guidelines Anthropology South Africa. (2004). Ethical Guidelines and Principles of Conduct for Anthropologists. Bloemfontein: ASA. Available online: <http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/socialanth/asa.doc> [15.05.2007].
- Fanon F. (1967). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press.
- Ferguson, J. (1990). *The Anti-Politics Machine. 'Development', Depoliticization and Bureaucratic State Power in Lesotho*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Field, D. and I. Johnson (1993). Satisfaction and Change: A Survey of Volunteers in Hospice Organization. In *Social Science. Med.*, Vol. 36, pp.1625-1634.
- Flick, M., Bittman, M. and J. Doyle (2002). The Community's Most Valuable (Hidden) Asset – Volunteering in Australia. In *Department of Family and Community Services*. Available online: <http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au> [22 September 2007].
- Foster, J. and K. Naidoo. (2001). *Young People at the Centre. Participating & Social Change*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Frankental, S. and O. Sichone (2005). *South Africa's Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook. Ethnic Diversity Within Nations*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO.
- Frisch, M. B. and M. Gerard (1981). Natural Helping Systems: A survey of Red Cross Volunteers. In *American Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol. 9, pp. 567-579.
- Gann, N. (1996). *Managing Change in Voluntary Organizations. A Guide to Practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Gelb, S. (2003). *Inequality in South Africa: Nature, Causes and Responses*. Johannesburg: The Edge Institute.

- Gillette, A. (2003). Taking People out of Boxes and Categories: Voluntary Service and Social Cohesion. In Perold, H., Stroud, S. and M. Sherraden (Eds). *Service Enquiry: Service in the 21st Century*, First edition, Johannesburg: Global Service Institute and Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa. Available online: <http://www.service-enquiry.org.za> [22 September 2007]
- Godehart, S. (2006). *The Transformation of Townships in South Africa – The Case of KwaMashu, Durban*. Dortmund: Spring Centre.
- Grusec, J. E. (1991). *The Socialization of Altruism*. In Clark, M. (Ed.) *Prosocial Behaviour*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Handy, C. (1988). *Understanding Voluntary Organization*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Hobart, M. (1993). Introduction: The Growth of Ignorance? In Hobart, M. (Ed.) *An Anthropological Critique of Development: The Growth of Ignorance*. London: Routledge.
- Irvin, K. (2006). *Volunteer Tourism and Development : An Impact Assessment of Volunteer Tourists from Two Organisations in Cape Town*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Cape Town.
- Johns Hopkins Centre for Civil Society Studies (2007). *Nonprofit Contribution to GDP Enormous*. New Study Reports. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Johnston, A. M. (2006). *Is the Sacred for Sale? Tourism and Indigenous People*. London: Earthscan.
- Krebs, D. and F. Van Hesteren (1992). The Development of Altruistic Personality. In Oliner, P., Oliner, S., Baron, L., Blum, L., Krebs, D. and Z. Smolenska (Eds.) *Embracing the Other: Philosophical, Psychological, and Historical Perspectives on Altruism*. New York: University Press.
- Lauffer, A. and S. Gorodezky (1977). *Volunteers*. London, California: Sage Publications.
- Lea, J.P. (1993). Tourism Development Ethics in the Third World. In *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 701-715.
- MacCannell, D. (1976). *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. New York: Schocken.
- Machlis G. E. and W.R. Burch (1983). Relations Between Strangers: Cycles of Structure and Meaning in Tourist Systems. In *Sociological Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp.666-692.
- Manser, G. and R. H. Cass (1976). *Voluntarism at the Crossroads*. New York: Family Service Association of America.
- Mauss, M. 1969. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Cohen & West.
- McKendrick, B. W. (1998). *Introduction to Social Work in South Africa*. Pinetown: Owen Burgess.
- McSweeney, P. and D. Alexander. (1996). *Managing Volunteers Effectively*. Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company.

- Merill, M. V. (2005). How Volunteers Benefit Organizations. Available online: <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/resources/how-to-guides/manage-volunteers/doc/how-volunteers-benefit-organizations.html> [19 May 2007]
- Mies, M. (1994). Gender and Global Capitalism. In Sklair, L. (Ed.) Capitalism and Development. London: Routledge.
- Nash, D. (1996). Anthropology of Tourism. New York: Pergamon.
- Patel, L. (2005). Social Welfare and Social Development in South Africa. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Perold, H., Patel, L., Carapinha, R. and S. E. Mohamed (2006). Five-Country Cross-National Study on Civic Service and Volunteering in Southern Africa: Civic Service: An Emerging Field of Enquiry in Southern Africa. (Unpublished research report), Johannesburg: VOSESA and Centre for Social Development in Africa.
- Pio, L. (2004). Motivation in the Context of the Life History of Volunteer Counsellors. Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Cape Town.
- Potgieter, M. C. (1998). The Social Work Process: Development to Empower People. South Africa: Prentice Hall South Africa.
- Rahnema, M. and V. Bawtree (1997). The Post Development Reader. London: Zed Books.
- Ranuga, T. K. (1986). Frantz Fanon and Black Consciousness in Azania (South Africa). In *Phylon*, Vol. 47, No. 3, pp. 182-191.
- Reisch, M. and S. Wenocur (1984). Professionalization and Voluntarism in Social Welfare: Changing Roles and Functions. In Schwartz, F. S. (Ed.) Voluntarism and Social Work Practice: A Growing Collaboration. New York: University Press of America.
- Rosenham, D. (1970). The Natural Socialization of Altruistic Autonomy. In Macauley J. and L. Berkowitz (Eds.) Altruism and Helping Behaviour. New York: Academic Press.
- Rovinski, Y. (1991). Private Reserves, Parks, and Ecotourism in Costa Rica. In Whelan, T. (Ed.) Nature Tourism: Managing for the Environment. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.
- Sachs, W. (1992). The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power. London: Zed Books.
- Scherl, L. M. (1994). Understanding Outdoor Recreation Experiences: Applications for Environmental Planning and Policy. In Mercer, D. (Ed.) New Viewpoints in Australian Outdoor Recreation Research and Planning. Melbourne: Hepper Marriot.
- Scheurich, J. J. (1997). Research Methods in the Postmodern. Washington: Falmer.
- Schreyer, R. and B. Driver (1989). The Benefits of Leisure. In Jackson E. and T. Burton (Eds.) Understanding Leisure and Recreation: Mapping the past, charting the future. State College, PA: Venture.

- Sewpual, V. and D. Holschler (2004). *Social Work in Times of Neoliberalism: A Postmodern Discourse*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Shackleton, C. M., Shackleton, S. E., Buiten, E. and N. Bird (2007). The Importance of Dry Woodlands and Forests in Rural Livelihoods and Poverty Alleviation in South Africa. In *Forest Policy and Economics*, Vol. 9, No. 5, pp. 558-577.
- Smith, D. H. (1981). Altruism, Volunteers, and Volunteerism. In *Journal of Voluntary Action Research*, Vol. 10, pp. 21-36.
- Smith, D. H. (1994). Determinants of Voluntary Association Participation and Volunteering: A Literature Review. In *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 23, pp. 243-63.
- Stronza, A. (2001). Anthropology of Tourism: Forging New Ground for Ecotourism and Other Alternatives. In *Annual Reviews of Anthropology*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 261-283.
- Tillmann, K.-J. (2003) *Sozialisationstheorien. Eine Einführung in den Zusammenhang von Gesellschaft, Institution und Subjektwerdung*. Hamburg: Rowohlt's Enzyklopädie.
- Turner, V. W. (1969). *The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti-Structure*. London, Routledge.
- Unger, L. S. (1991). Altruism as a Motivation to Volunteer. In *Journal of Economic Psychology*, Vol. 12, pp. 71-100.
- United Nations Development Programme (2003). *Volunteerism and Development. Essentials*, No. 12, Evaluation Office UNPD. Available online: <http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/essentials/volunteerism.pdf> [15 July 2007]
- United Nations Volunteers: <http://www.unvolunteers.org>
- Voicu, M. and Voicu, B. (2003). Volunteering in Romania. In Dekker, P. and L. Halman (Eds.) *The Values of Volunteering: Cross-cultural Perspectives*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer Tourism. Experience that Make a Difference*. Oxfordshire: CABI.
- Wiehe, V. R. and L. Isenhour (1977). Motivation of Volunteers. In *Journal of Social Welfare*, Vol. 4, pp. 73-79.
- Williams, M. (2001). *Making Volunteering Work. An Essential Guide to Managing Volunteers in Non-profit Organisations in Southern Africa*. Cape Town: Papillon Press.
- Wilson, J. (2000). Volunteering. In *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 26, pp. 215-240.
- Wilson, J. and M. Musick (1997). Who Cares? Toward an Integrated Theory of Volunteer Work. In *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 62, No. 5, pp. 694-713.
- World Volunteer Web: www.worldvolunteerweb.com
- Wolf, E. R. (1982). *Europe and the People without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wright, S. (1998). The Politicization of 'Culture'. In *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 7-15.

Wuthnow, R. (1998). *Loose Connections: Joining Together in America's Fragmented Communities*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

University of Cape Town

Appendix 1

Questions asked the volunteers in the course of the interviews:

- Why did you become a volunteer worker?
- Why did you decide to volunteer in South Africa?
- Why did you choose this programme?
- What do you know about the organisation you work for?
- What do you expect to be dealing with in your work?
- What do you know about the target group you will be work with?
- Have you travelled before? Where? When? With whom?
- If studying: What are you studying?
- Who is paying for this trip?
- Have you got prior teaching experiences?

Appendix 2

Questions asked in the evaluation form for the parents with regard to the two-week Outreach programme in the township:

- 1.) Has your child enjoyed the holiday programme?
- 2.) Did your child talk to you about the lessons? What did he/she say?
- 3.) Do you think the lessons have helped your child?
- 4.) Have you noticed any improvement in your child's reading, writing or English?
- 5.) Do you think your child is more confident about their reading, writing and English?
- 6.) Would you like your child to continue with reading lessons on Tuesday afternoons during the school term?